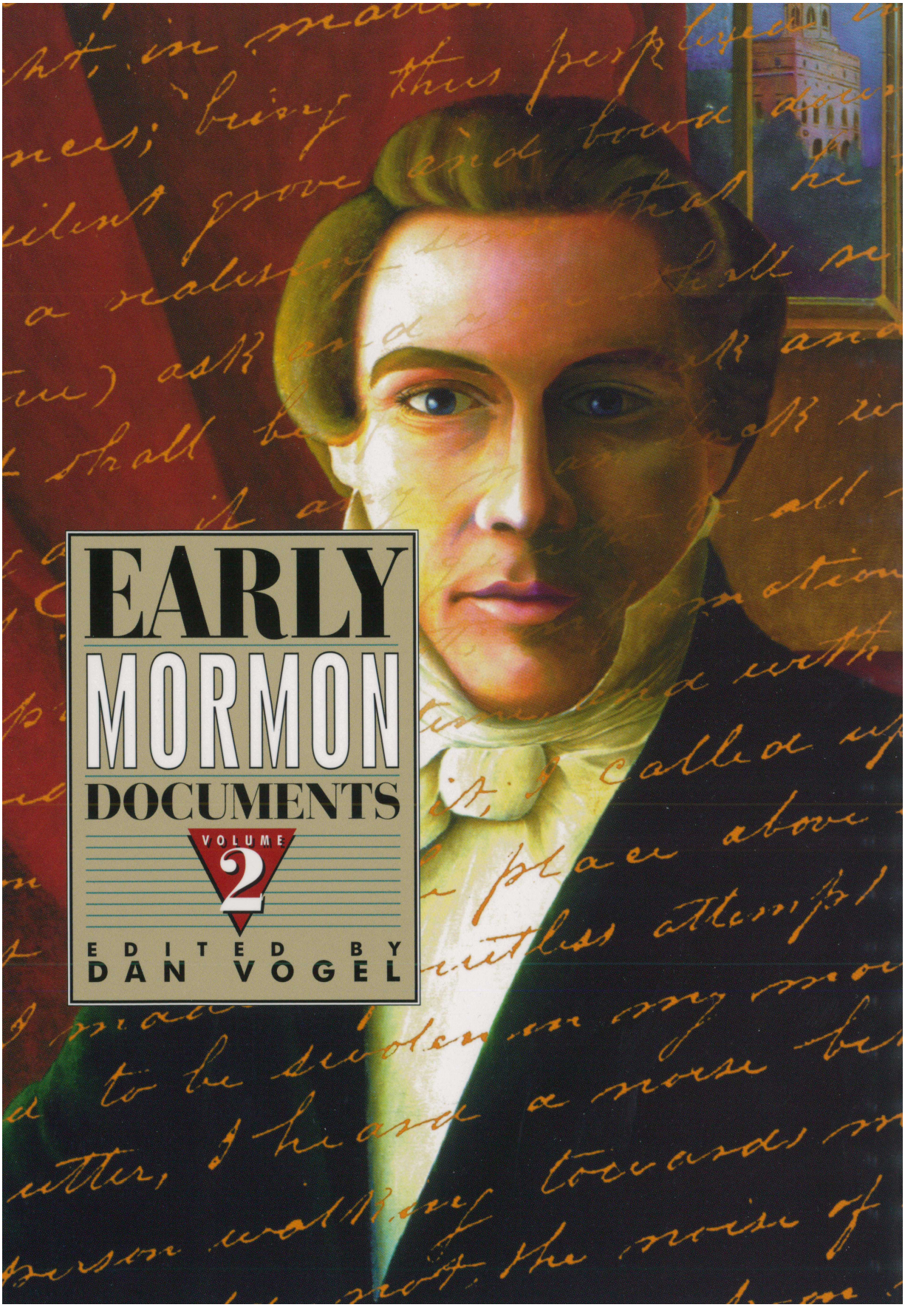
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EARLY MORMON DOCUMENTS

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COMPILED AND EDITED BY

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PART III.

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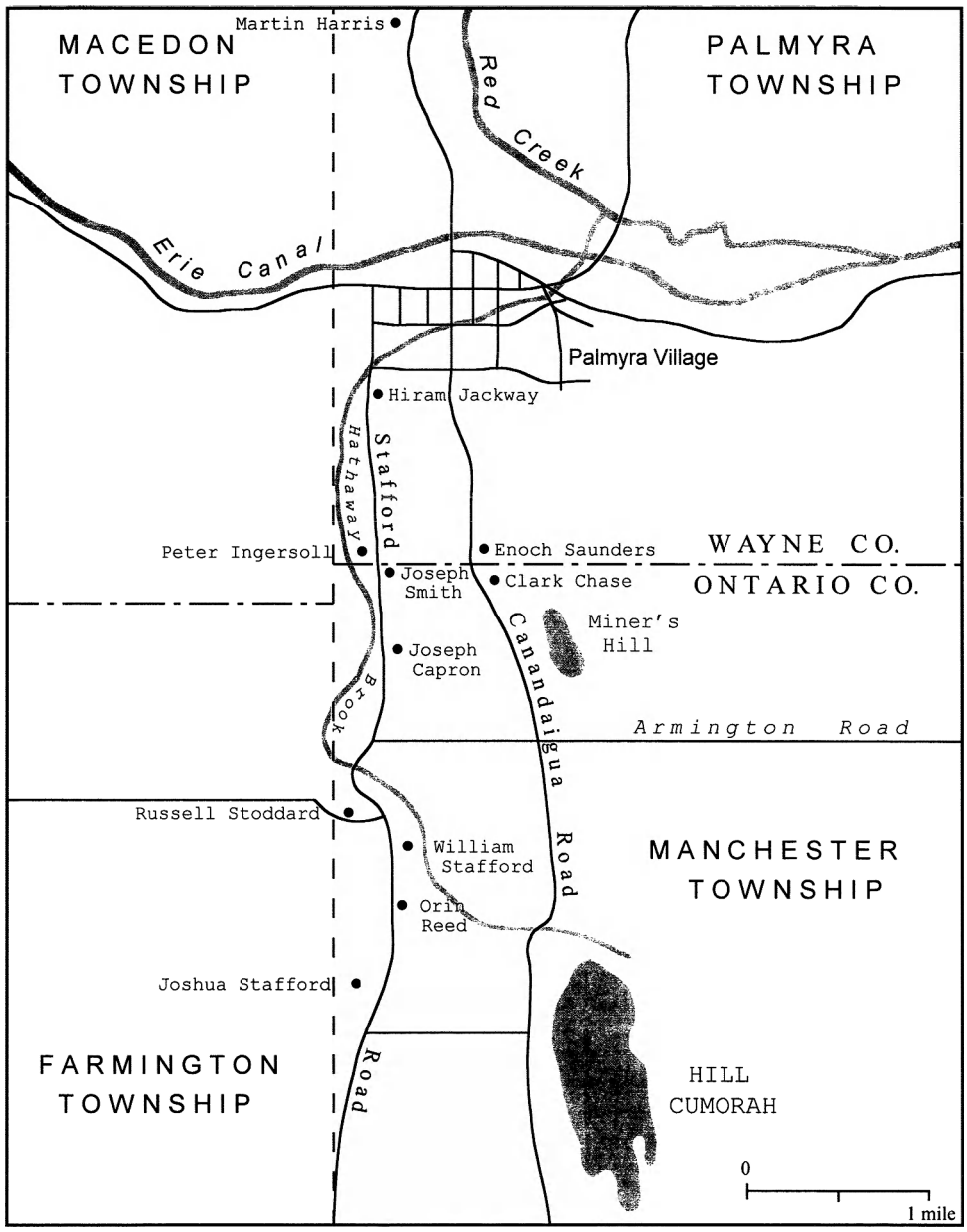
Mormon Origins in Palmyra and Manchester, NEW YORK



Map of Palmyra and Manchester Townships.

INTRODUCTION TO PALMYRA AND MANCHESTER, NEW YORK, DOCUMENTS

Discouraged by three successive years of crop failure, Joseph Smith, Sr., left Norwich, Vermont, in the late summer or early fall of 1816 in search of a better land. The remainder of his family joined him in Palmyra, Ontario County (Wayne County after 1823), sometime in the winter of 1816-17, perhaps in January. The earliest record of the Smith family's presence in Palmyra is a road list of April 1817, apparently locating them at the west end of Palmyra's Main Street (see III.L.1, PALMYRA [NY] ROAD LISTS, 1817-1822).

The Smiths may have lived in Palmyra Village for as long as three years, where among other things they ran a "cake and beer shop" (III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 12). During their residence, Joseph Sr. continued having visionary dreams, one in 1818 and another the following year (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:Frags. 2 & 4), and Joseph Jr. began searching the Bible and investigating various churches (I.A.7, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1832, 1-2).

Palmyra road lists also suggest that sometime between April 1819 and April 1820 most of the Smith family moved south of the village on Stafford Road, while Alvin continued to maintain the family store on Main Street (III.L.1, PALMYRA [NY] ROAD LIST, 1817-1822). The Smiths moved into a small log cabin situated very near the southern border of Palmyra township on land owned by Samuel Jennings (III.L.2, PALMYRA [NY] HIGHWAY SURVEY, 13 JUN 1820). This is consistent with the testimony of the Smiths' neighbors in nearby Manchester township who said they first became acquainted with the Smiths about 1820 and remembered their treasure-seeking activities (III.A.13, WILLIAM STAFFORD STATEMENT, 8 DEC 1833, 237; III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 240; III.A.2, BARTON STAFFORD STATEMENT, 3 NOV 1833, 250; III.A.15, HENRY HARRIS STATEMENT, CIRCA 1833, 251; III.A.4, JOSHUA STAFFORD STATEMENT, 15 NOV 1833, 258).

Joseph Jr. claimed to have had an open vision about this time, but his various accounts of the experience differ: his 1832 History, for instance, says that he saw Christ in 1821 (I.A.7, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1832, 1, 3), whereas his 1839 History and subsequent accounts say he saw two

personages, the Father and the Son, early in the spring of 1820 (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 3; I.A.23, JOSEPH SMITH INTERVIEW WITH DAVID WHITE, 29 AUG 1843; I.A.19, JOSEPH SMITH TO JOHN WENTWORTH, 1 MAR 1842, 706-7; and I.A.24, JOSEPH SMITH TO I. DANIEL RUPP, 1843, 405; see also Walters 1969a; Walters 1969b; M. Hill 1982; Marquardt and Walters 1994, 15-41).

While it has been generally held that the Smiths contracted for their Manchester farm in 1818 (Bushman 1984, 48), the land was not available for purchase until 14 July 1820 when land agent Zachariah Seymour obtained power of attorney over the property of deceased Nicholas Evertson (see III.L.4, SMITH MANCHESTER [NY] LAND RECORDS, 1820-1830). Joseph Sr. and Alvin therefore articled for the land after 14 July and before the taking of the 1820 census in August, which lists the Smiths in Farmington (renamed Manchester in April 1822) (III.L.3, FARMINGTON [NY] CENSUS RECORD, 1820). But the Smiths probably did not move onto their new land until they had completed building their own cabin in 1822 or 1823. Thus, despite contracting for the Evertson land, the Smiths continued to appear on the Palmyra road lists until 1822 (III.L.1, PALMYRA [NY] ROAD LISTS, 1817-1822). In July 1823 the Smith property was assessed at $1,000, a significant increase from the previous year, probably indicating completion of the cabin after June 1822 and before July 1823 (III.L.6, SMITH MANCHESTER [NY] LAND ASSESSMENT RECORDS, 1821-1823 & 1830).

The hundred-acre lot the Smiths had purchased was thickly wooded and required clearing before farming could begin. Lucy remembered that "something like thirty acres of land were got ready for cultivation the first year" (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, 1853:70). William recalled that his father and older brothers worked on clearing the land six or seven years and that much of it was done by burning (I.D.2, WILLIAM SMITH NOTES, CIRCA 1875, 35). In the first years the Smiths may have eked out a scanty income by selling the remains of their brush and log fires to the asheries for making potash, selling cord wood, or perhaps making barrels. Later the Smiths would raise corn and wheat, as well as a sizeable sugar crop. Despite their early energies, the Smiths would lose their Manchester farm in 1825, thereafter remaining on the land as tenants. It would be natural for them to lose interest in slaving on a land not their own, and it is probably in reference to this later period that Hurlbut's witnesses accused the Smiths of idleness (see "Philastus Hurlbut Collection").

Joseph Sr. was not only an inspired dreamer but also a rod worker and believer in enchanted treasures, and his namesake followed his example. The

younger Joseph's procurement of a curious-looking stone, discovered while digging a well on the Chase farm sometime in 1822, put him in a prominent position among his treasure-seeking companions in the Palmyra/Manchester area (III.B.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 240-41). By placing the stone in the crown of a hat and burying his face in the hat, Joseph said he could see things hidden to the natural eye. According to many witnesses, he would later use the same stone and method to translate the Book of Mormon.

In the late night hours of 21/22 September 1823, seventeen-year-old Joseph Jr., as he would later claim, was visited by an angel who told of an ancient book of gold plates buried in a nearby hill. On the day following this vision, Smith visited the hill, which he would later learn was called "Cumorah" by the ancients, turned over a large stone, and discovered the plates in a small stone vault. At this time the angel prevented Smith from removing the plates but instructed him to return at the same time the following year (e.g., I.A.7, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1832, 1, 4; I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 7). Of Smith family members who gathered that evening to hear his account of the angel and gold plates, Alvin was the most excited (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:42-43). In some accounts the angel instructs Smith to bring his oldest brother with him the following year, but Alvin's accidental death prevented Joseph from obtaining the plates in 1824 (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 9-10; III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 16; IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 1; I.C.1, JOSEPH SMITH, SR. INTERVIEW WITH FAYETTE LAPHAM, 1830, 306-307). Having received a lethal dose of Calomel from the attending physician, which apparently lodged in his stomach or intestine, Alvin suffered an agonizing death on 19 November 1823.

Following Joseph Jr.'s second failure to obtain the plates, Palmyra experienced a revival of religion during which Lucy Smith and three of her older children (Hyrum, Samuel, and Sophronia) joined the Presbyterian church (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:49-50; Walters 1969a; Walters 1969b; and M. Hill 1982; Marquardt and Walters 1994, 15-41). William Smith remembered that his mother put considerable pressure on other family members to join (I.D.4, WILLIAM SMITH *ON MORMONISM,* 1883, 6), but Joseph and his father refused.

Before his death Alvin had begun construction of a wood-frame house. With the help of a neighbor by the name of Stoddard and other carpenters, the house was finished about October or November 1825 (I.B.5, LUCY

SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:45-46, 1853:91). About this time Josiah Stowell came to Manchester and hired the two Josephs to help him find a lost Spanish mine in northern Pennsylvania. In their absence, Stoddard attempted to swindle the Smiths out of their property. The conflict ended on 20 December 1825 when Lemuel Durfee, a well-to-do Quaker, purchased the property and allowed the Smiths to remain as renters (III.L.4, SMITH MANCHESTER [NY] LAND RECORDS, 1820-1830; I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:56-58).

After Joseph Jr. married Emma Hale in South Bainbridge, Chenango County, New York, on 18 January 1827, the couple lived briefly with Joseph's parents. In the early morning hours of 22 September, while most of the Smith family and visitors Josiah Stowell and Joseph Knight, Sr., were sleeping, Joseph took Emma to the hill and removed the plates (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:60-61). Conflict with his former treasure-seeking friends prevented Joseph from translating the plates in Manchester. With financial aid from acquaintance Martin Harris, Joseph and Emma sought refuge in Harmony, Pennsylvania, departing Manchester in December 1827.

In February 1828 Harris visited Harmony and received from Smith a sample of the ancient writing engraved on the plates. Harris then traveled to Utica, Albany, and New York City seeking learned opinion about the strange script, including that of noted linguist Charles Anthon of Columbia University. Harris returned to Harmony in April convinced that Smith alone possessed power to translate the otherwise unknown language (see discussion in "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection"). From about 12 April to about 14 June, Harris wrote about 116 pages of manuscript from Smith's dictation. Harris's tenure as scribe, however, ended in disaster when he borrowed a portion of the translation manuscript, carried it to Palmyra, and lost it. The manuscript was likely burned by Harris's wife, Lucy, who wanted to end her husband's involvement with Smith (see III.L.16, BOOK OF MORMON PREFACE, 1829). After this crisis, Smith was without a permanent scribe until Oliver Cowdery arrived in early April 1829. Cowdery had taught school in Manchester the previous winter and boarded with the Smiths, where he learned about Joseph's discovery of gold plates. Believing himself called to the work, Cowdery accompanied Samuel Smith to Harmony to become Joseph's scribe.

Meanwhile, the Smiths were forced to vacate their home and move into the small cabin that Hyrum and his wife, Jerusha, had been occupying since their marriage in November 1825. Durfee's daughter and son-in-law,

Roswell Nichols, became the occupants of the home and began working the farm.

Persecution in Harmony necessitated a temporary relocation to the home of Peter Whitmer, Sr., in Fayette, New York, where Smith completed the translation during the last days of June. In early June 1829 Smith visited Palmyra/Manchester to begin negotiations with Egbert B. Grandin, publisher of the *Wayne Sentinel,* to print the Book of Mormon (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 26, 34; III.H.8, JOHN H. GILBERT STATEMENT, 23 OCT 1887; III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892). When Grandin initially declined, Smith visited anti-Masonic publisher Thurlow Weed of Rochester, who also turned him down (III.K.17, THURLOW WEED REMINISCENCES, 1854, 1858, 1880 & 1884). Grandin eventually agreed to print the Book of Mormon when Martin Harris offered his farm as security for payment (III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829).

In late June 1829, following the visionary experience of the three witnesses in Fayette and the completion of the translation, Joseph returned to Palmyra to finalize the agreement with Grandin. During this visit eight more witnesses, including Joseph's father and two brothers, saw the plates in the woods near the Smiths' Manchester cabin (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:102; III.L.13, TESTIMONY OF EIGHT WITNESSES, JUN 1829). Smith remained in Manchester several months to oversee the first stages of printing. After instructing Cowdery to prepare a printer's copy of the Book of Mormon manuscript, Smith left Manchester in late September or early October, arriving at Harmony on 4 October (I.A.1, JOSEPH SMITH TO OLIVER COWDERY, 22 OCT 1829, 1).

In Smith's absence, the work of printing continued, Hyrum bringing installments of about twenty-four pages of manuscript to Grandin's office (III.H.6, JOHN H. GILBERT STATEMENTS, 1882; III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892). Joseph Smith returned to Palmyra/Manchester briefly in late January 1830 to confront Abner Cole, who was publishing extracts from the Book of Mormon in his *Palmyra Reflector* in violation of copyright restrictions (see introduction to III.E.3, *PALMYRA REFLECTOR,* 1829-1831; I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:111-13).

As the first Books of Mormon were being completed in late March, Joseph Smith again visited Palmyra/Manchester with Joseph Knight, Sr. During this visit, on 6 April 1830, Smith organized the church (despite the tradition that it occurred in Fayette), and Oliver Cowdery baptized Joseph Sr. and Martin Harris in a nearby creek (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HIS-

TORY, 1839, n. 82; IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 7; IV.A.4, JOSEPH KNIGHT, JR., STATEMENT, 11 AUG 1862). The focus of Mormon activity quickly shifted to Fayette, however, with major additions to church membership, so the relatively informal organizational meeting in Manchester soon paled in significance.

In early October 1830, Joseph and Emma Smith visited Manchester. Joseph received a revelation that instructed Hyrum to move his family to Colesville and for the rest of the Smiths to move to Waterloo. Hyrum, who was experiencing legal difficulties, was happy to depart Manchester (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, 1853:158-69; III.L.19, NATHAN PIERCE DOCKET BOOK, 1830). About this time Joseph Sr. was jailed in Canandaigua for an unpaid debt, remaining incarcerated for at least thirty days (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:Frag. 6 [back]; III.I.1, ELI BRUCE DIARY, 5 NOV 1830). In mid-October Oliver Cowdery, Parley P. Pratt, Ziba Peterson, and Peter Whitmer, Jr., left Manchester on a mission to Ohio and Missouri. At the instigation of Pratt, the men stopped at Mentor, Ohio, where they converted Sidney Rigdon and others, then moved on to Missouri where they preached to some of the plains Indians (see III.L.22, MISSIONARIES COVENANT, 17 OCT 1830). In late October, in absence of Joseph Sr., Samuel Smith moved his mother and a younger brother and sister to Waterloo (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, 1853:167).

After Rigdon's arrival at Fayette in early December 1830, he and Smith toured the various branches of the church, traveling first to the Palmyra/Manchester area. Smith preached in Ezra Thayre's barn near Canandaigua (III.J.6, EZRA THAYRE REMINISCENCE, 1862, 83), and Rigdon delivered a sermon at Palmyra's Young Men's Association in the third story of Exchange Row (III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884, 5; III.D.9, LORENZO SAUNDERS STATEMENT, 21 JUL 1887; III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 76-79). Smith also received a revelation while at Canandaigua which instructed him and Rigdon to stop work on the Bible revision until after they reached Ohio (Book of Commandments CXXXIX, heading; D&C 37).

About 24 January 1831, Smith and Rigdon left Fayette for Ohio, stopping along the way to preach at Calvin and Sophronia Stoddard's in Macedon and Preserved Harris's in Palmyra (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:Frag. 9 [back]). Martin Harris and others from this area would follow Smith to Ohio in the spring. In fulfillment of his agreement with Grandin, Harris sold his farm (about 151 acres) to Thomas Lakey on 1 April 1831 and by the end of the month had vacated the premises (see

introduction to III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829). The *Wayne Sentinel* announced on 27 May that Martin Harris and several other families "took up their march from this town [Palmyra] last week for the 'promised land'" (III.E.1, *WAYNE SENTINEL,* 1824-1836, under 27 May 1831).

The documents pertaining to the Palmyra/Manchester residence of the Smith family are extremely complicated. Documents collected by Philastus Hurlbut in 1833, William H. and Edmund L. Kelley in 1881 and 1884, Chester C. Thorne in 1880 and 1881, and Arthur B. Deming in 1885 and 1887 have been treated as collections under individual headings. Various statements from the *Wayne Sentinel, Palmyra Freeman,* and *Palmyra Reflector* have been collected under the heading "Palmyra Newspapers." Many statements and interviews of Martin Harris and Oliver Cowdery (considered a resident of Manchester in this work because he was boarding with the Smiths at the time he learned about the gold plates), are presented in chronological order in their own collections. These collections are followed by a John H. Gilbert Collection, who made several statements regarding his participation in the printing and publishing of the Book of Mormon.

A subsequent volume will contain additional sources dealing with Mormon origins in the Palmyra/Manchester area, arranged as follows: "Miscellaneous Early Sources," "Miscellaneous Late Sources," "Miscellaneous Non-resident Sources," and "Miscellaneous Documents." The miscellaneous documents section contains civil and other records that deal incidently with Smith family history as well as records that deal directly with Mormon origins (such as the Book of Mormon copyright, Testimony of Eight Witnesses, Book of Mormon Preface, Joseph Smith, Sr., and Martin Harris Agreement, and Missionaries Covenant).

A.
Philastus Hurlbut
COLLECTION

INTRODUCTION TO PHILASTUS HURLBUT COLLECTION

Doctor Philastus Hurlbut[1] (1809-83), born in Chittenden County, Vermont, joined the Mormon church in Ohio in 1833. But within a few months he was excommunicated for "immorality" and became a major antagonist of Joseph Smith (see Jessee 1992, 556).

Perhaps inspired by the affidavit appearing in the *Painesville Telegraph* in 1831 regarding Smith's treasure-seeking activities and signed by ten Palmyra residents (III.I.3, PALMYRA RESIDENTS TO *PAINESVILLE* (OH) *TELEGRAPH,* 12 MAR 1831), Hurlbut interviewed Smith's former neighbors in western New York. E. D. Howe reported that "in 1833 and [18]34 Grandison Newel[,] Orrin Clapp[,] Nathan Corning of Mentor and many leading citizens of Kirtland and Geauga Co employed and defrayed the expenses of Doctor Philastus Hurlbut who had been a Mormon preacher and sent him to Palmyra NY and Penn to obtain affidavits showing the bad character of the Mormon Smith family" (E. D. Howe, Affidavit, 8 April 1885, Arthur B. Deming Collection, Chicago Historical Society, Chicago, Illinois).[2]

Visiting Palmyra in November and December 1833, Hurlbut began collecting affidavits about Smith's reputation. On 6 December 1833 the *Wayne Sentinel* announced that "Doct. P. Hurlbert" was "now at this place

---

1. "Doctor" was his given name.

2. James A. Briggs named other members of this committee, who met again to examine the evidence Hurlbut had collected: "In the winter of 1833-34, or in the early spring of 1834, a number of gentlemen in Willoughby who felt an interest in the Mormon question appointed themselves a committee to look into the matter. They were Judge Nehemiah Allen, who had been an Associate Judge of the county of Cuyahoga, a representative in the Legislature; Dr. George W. Card, an intelligent physician; Samuel Wilson, an active and energetic business man; Jonathan Lapham, a lawyer of many years at the bar, and myself, a very young lawyer. We met at the house of Mr. W. Corning, in Mentor, now the Garfield place, a well-to-do and independent farmer. Dr. P. Hurlbut also met with us. He lived in Kirtland and during the winter and spring had given much in looking up evidence and documents to prove that Mormonism was a delusion" (James A. Briggs to Arthur B. Deming, 22 March 1886, *Naked Truths About Mormonism* 1 [January 1888]: 4).

as a missionary in behalf of the people of Kirtland for the purpose of investigating the origin of the Mormon sect." Cornelius R. Stafford remembered that "a man (Hurlbut) came to our school house and took statements about the bad character of the Mormon Smith family, and saw them swear to them" (III.D.4, CORNELIUS R. STAFFORD STATEMENT, [23] MAR 1885). That Hurlbut had a specific kind of testimony in mind as he collected his affidavits is attested to by Benjamin Saunders, who said that Hurlbut "came to me but he could not get out of me what he wanted; so [he] went to others" (III.B.13, BENJAMIN SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, CIRCA SEP 1884, 29).

Although there were undoubtedly those like Saunders who were more sympathetic towards the Smiths,[3] Hurlbut had no difficulty finding hostile witnesses. When Mormon missionary John S. Carter visited the Palmyra/Manchester area in early September 1833, less than two months before Hurlbut's visit, he noted in his diary: "The people greatly opposed to the work of God. Talked with many of them, & found them unable to make out anything against Joseph Smith, altho they talked hard against him" (cited in Bitton 1977, 62). Likewise, following his own investigations in Palmyra, Henry Pratt told his believing son Addison Pratt in a May 1838 letter, "They informed me at Palmyra that the character & conduct of Jo Smith & Martin Harris, did not correspond at all with the character & conduct of christians" (Henry Pratt to Addison Pratt, 20 May 1838, private possession; photocopy LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah). Unlike Hurlbut, however, Carter and Pratt did not supply the names of those whom they consulted.

If Hurlbut was guilty of choosing negatively biased witnesses and ignoring those more favorable towards the Smith family, the suggestion that Hurlbut put words into the mouths of his witnesses is doubtful (R. L. Anderson 1970, 286-90; and 1991, 52-80).[4] Despite minor similarities in

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3. Within a year following the publication of Hurlbut's affidavits, Jonathan H. Hale, Thomas B. Marsh, and David W. Patten visited Palmyra to make inquiry about Smith's reputation. Hale recorded in his journal: "We went about in the Neighbourhood from house to house to inquire the Character of Joseph Smith jr previous to his receiving the Book of Mormon[.] the amount was that his Character was as good as young men in General" (cited in Bitton 1977, 134). Unlike Hurlbut, however, these men collected no affidavits and made no attempt to publish the results of their investigation.

4. In an attempt to impugn Hurlbut, Mormon apologist Richard L. Anderson has compared Hurlbut's Palmyra/Manchester affidavits to those Hurlbut also collected from witnesses in Ohio and Pennsylvania in September and August 1833 pertaining to the so-called "Spaulding theory" of the

terminology, which might be due to Hurlbut's method of questioning, the affidavits are signed and in several instances notarized. Moreover, none of Hurlbut's witnesses ever recanted or corrected their statement. For these reasons, Rodger I. Anderson has concluded that Hurlbut's affidavits "can be relied on as accurate reflections of their signers' views" (R. I. Anderson 1990, 114).

Upon his return to Ohio, Hurlbut resumed his attack on Joseph Smith and Mormonism, reading from the affidavits he had collected at public meetings (see introduction to V.A.1, ISAAC HALE STATEMENT, 1834). "Hurlbut returned to Ohio and lectured on the Origin of Mormonism and the Book of Mormon," Howe remembered. "I heard him Lecture in Painesville" (E. D. Howe, Affidavit, 8 April 1885, Arthur B. Deming Collection, Chicago Historical Society, Chicago, Illinois).

The bitterness between Hurlbut and Joseph Smith eventually resulted in a trial. J. C. Dowen, Justice of the Peace in Kirtland, Ohio, recalled that "Hurlbut said he would kill Jo Smith. He meant he would kill Mormonism. The Mormons urged me to issue a writ against him. I did, as recorded in my docket, Dec. 27, 1833 on complaint of Joseph Smith, warrant returnable to William Holbrook, Esq., at Painesville, Ohio. He was brought to trial and

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Book of Mormon's origin (see Howe 1834, 278-87). "Since historians generally dismiss the 'Spaulding theory,'" argues Anderson, "Hurlbut's affidavits supporting it now appear as prompted propaganda" (1991, 60). As with the New York affidavits, the similarity in terminology of the statements does not necessarily prove Hurlbut's heavy-handedness. Regardless, the signers were responsible for the content of the affidavits, not Hurlbut. Despite the assertion that Hurlbut prompted his witnesses and somehow controlled the content of the Spaulding affidavits, the theory had an origin and a life of its own quite apart from Hurlbut. Hurlbut did not invent the Spaulding theory, but was drawn to Spaulding's former residence in Conneaut, Ohio, to investigate claims that some residents were making about the Book of Mormon. Had Hurlbut invented the theory and falsely extracted testimony from his witnesses, he would not have made strenuous efforts to recover Spaulding's manuscript. Contrary to Anderson, the two sets of Hurlbut documents are not comparable. In the first instance, the Palmyra/Manchester residents testify to either first-hand or second-hand information about the Smith family that occurred in the recent past; whereas in the case of the Spaulding affidavits the witnesses made literary comparisons based on memories at least twenty years old. Thus even E. D. Howe, when publishing Hurlbut's Spaulding affidavits in 1834, noted their weakness as testimony (1834, 278). I see no reason to doubt the sincerity of either Hurlbut or his Ohio witnesses, although the memories of the latter were certainly mistaken.

over 50 witnesses were called. The trial lasted several days and he was bound over to appear at the court of common pleas at C<h>ardon. Hurlbut let E. D. Howe, of Painesville, have his manuscript to publish" (J. C. Dowen, Affidavit, 2 January 1885, Arthur B. Deming Collection, Chicago Historical Society, Chicago, Illinois). However, on 9 April 1834 the Geauga County Court of Common Pleas found sufficient evidence to support "the opinion that the said complainant [Joseph Smith] had ground to fear that the said Doctor Ph[ilastus] Hurlbut would wound, beat or kill him, or destroy his property" ("Ohio v. Dr. P. Hurlbut," 9 April 1834, Book M, p. 193, Geauga County Courthouse, Chardon, Ohio; cited in Jessee 1984, 647, n. 90). The court therefore set bail at $200 and charged Hurlbut to keep the peace.

Perhaps because of his questionable reputation, together with his limited writing abilities, Hurlbut turned his affidavits over to E. D. Howe of Painesville to have them published. Howe recalled, "He [Hurlbut] finally came to me to have the evidence he had published. I bargained to pay him in books which I sent to him at Conneaut[,] O." (E. D. Howe, Affidavit, 8 April 1885, Arthur B. Deming Collection, Chicago Historical Society, Chicago, Illinois). Howe published many of Hurlbut's affidavits in his book *Mormonism Unvailed,* which was released on 28 November 1834 (see ibid.). The Mormons, of course, denounced Howe's book as full of lies (*Messenger and Advocate* 1:116; 2:296, 314; J. Smith 1948, 2:268-70).

Recalling his association with Hurlbut in 1885, Howe remarked: "I was not acquainted with Hurlbut untill he came to me to have his evidence published. He was [a] good sized fine looking [man] full of gab but illiterate and had lectured on many subjects[.] About five years ago he wrote me for Manuscript Found. I thought he was very forgetful or demented. I had been informed he had a pyralitic attack" (E. D. Howe, Affidavit, 8 April 1885, Arthur B. Deming Collection, Chicago Historical Society, Chicago, Illinois).[5]

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5. Howe's comment that Hurlbut was illiterate brings up additional questions about the latter's affidavits. As Dale Morgan noted, "If he was indeed illiterate, this would seem to suggest that Howe must have put the affidavits into proper English unless, as has been doubted, the interviewed people wrote them" (J. P. Walker 1986, 142). However, a number of letters written by Hurlbut in the 1840s and published in the *Religious Telescope* would tend to challenge Howe's characterization of Hurlbut as illiterate, or at least mark it as an exaggeration. See *Religious Telescope,* 3 December 1845, 150; 4 February 1846; 29 July 1846, 6-7; 16 June 1847, 368; 23 August 1848; 20 September 1848, 59. My thanks to Dale W. Adams of Ohio State University for bringing these sources to my attention.

Of the fifteen statements, only six are presented in affidavit form. On 9 December 1833 Peter Ingersoll, William Stafford, and Barton Stafford appeared before Thomas P. Baldwin, who was a Wayne County judge from February 1830 to February 1835 (see Braden and Kelley 1884, 382-83), to formalize their previously written statements. On 11 and 12 December 1833, Willard Chase and David Stafford appeared before Frederick Smith, a justice of the peace for Wayne County. One affidavit, that of Henry Harris, was taken at Cuyahoga County, Ohio, before justice of the peace Jonathan Lapham. The Hurlbut affidavits are presented in the order in which they were composed.

1.
MANCHESTER RESIDENTS GROUP STATEMENT, 3 NOVEMBER 1833

Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 262.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Among the first affidavits Hurlbut collected in New York was a group statement signed by eleven residents of Manchester. The affidavit was likely written by Hurlbut, who then presented it for ratification by the signers. Of the fifteen affidavits collected by Hurlbut in Palmyra/Manchester, the two group statements are of less historical significance than the individual statements, although the assertions of the former are often supported in the latter. Hurlbut's probable authorship, however, as Rodger I. Anderson has argued, "does not mean that the statements are inaccurate reflections of their signers' intentions" (R. I. Anderson 1990, 30-31). The suggestion that the signers were "nonliterary farmers" and therefore unaware of what they had ratified remains unproven if not doubtful (R. L. Anderson 1970, 286).

Manchester, Nov. 3d, 1833.

We, the undersigned, being personally acquainted with the family of Joseph Smith, sen. with whom the celebrated Gold Bible, so called, originated, state: that they were not only a lazy, indolent set of men,[1] but also

1. This charge is repeated in the individual statements of Parley Chase, David Stafford, Henry Harris, Joshua Stafford, and Joseph Capron. This judgment is probably partly based on the Smiths' preoccupation with treasure seeking, considered by some an idle pastime. The fact that Joseph Smith, Sr., was digging for treasure with Josiah Stowell in Harmony, Pennsylvania, at a time when he should have been working hard to make the final payment on his Manchester property undoubtedly contributed to the neighbors' assessment of his character. Despite the Smiths' obvious industry in the early 1820s in clearing sixty acres of heavily wooded land and building a cabin and a frame house, their interest in the 100-acre Manchester lot undoubtedly diminished after Lemuel Durfee became owner in December 1825. The Smiths' decrease in activity on the lot during the remaining three and a half years—partly due to their changed status, partly because of the loss of Joseph

intemperate[2]; and their word was not to be depended upon[3]; and that we are

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Jr., who went to Colesville to work for Joseph Knight, and Samuel, who worked for Durfee six months out of the year for rent—likely reinforced any judgment the neighbors had made about the Smiths. Despite the charge of laziness, the Smiths were known as good workers to hire, although Joseph Jr. was particularly singled out as "lazy" by one sympathetic observer (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 12).

2. Here and in the general affidavit of Palmyra residents, the Smiths are accused of intemperance. This charge, especially the use of harsh language ("destitute of moral character" and "addicted to vicious habits"), likely reflects the attitudes of those involved in the temperance movement. Many signers of Hurlbut's general affidavits were Presbyterian, Baptist, or Quaker—groups greatly influenced by the temperance movement. Three of the signers of the Palmyra affidavit, Henry Jessup, George Beckwith, and George N. Williams, participated in a committee of elders that suspended Gain Robinson's membership in Palmyra's Presbyterian church in 1828 for "an immoderate and in=temperate use of spiritous liquors to the great injury of his christian character and usefulness" ("Records of the Session of the Presbyterian Church in Palmyra," vol. 2, p. 1, Western Presbyterian Church, Palmyra, New York). Nevertheless, the sometimes excessive drinking of Joseph Sr. and Joseph Jr. is well attested, both in sources friendly and unfriendly to the Smiths. For Joseph Sr.'s drinking, see I.C.2, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., BLESSINGS, 1834, n. 11; for Joseph Jr.'s, see III.A.2, BARTON STAFFORD STATEMENT, 3 NOV 1833, n. 4.

3. This accusation was likely due to the Smiths leaving the area without paying their debts (see also III.A.3, JOSEPH CAPRON STATEMENT, 8 NOV 1833, 260; III.A.8, ROSWELL NICHOLS STATEMENT, 1 DEC 1833; III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 247-48; and III.I.6, JESSE TOWNSEND TO PHINEAS STILES, 24 DEC 1833). Both Hyrum Smith and Joseph Smith, Sr., left Manchester under suspicious circumstances. For Hyrum's debt troubles, see I.A.5, JOSEPH SMITH TO COLESVILLE SAINTS, 2 DEC 1830, n. 10; and III.L.19, NATHAN PIERCE DOCKET BOOK, 1830; and for Joseph Sr.'s, see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, 1853:160-61; III.L.19, NATHAN PIERCE DOCKET BOOK, 1830; and Joseph Smith to Hyrum Smith, 3 March 1831, where Smith advises Hyrum, in Colesville, New York, not to travel through Buffalo because "David Jackways [of Palmyra] has threatened to take father [Smith] with a sup=reme writ" (reproduced in Jessee 1984, 231-32). Hiram Jackway, son of David Jackway, told the Kelleys that both Joseph Sr. and Hyrum Smith owed a "Mr. Jaynes 150$" (III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 12). Roswell Nichols gave a specific example of Joseph Sr.'s lying to the sheriff, and Willard Chase said Joseph Jr. refused to return his seer stone contrary to his promise. Parley Chase, Henry Harris, and Joseph Capron charged the Smiths with "lying" or "falsehood" without giv-

truly glad to dispense with their society.

Pardon Butts,[4]
Warden A. Reed,[5]
Hiram Smith,[6]
Alfred Stafford,
James Gee,[7]
Abel Chase,[8]
A. H. Wentworth,
Moses C. Smith,[9]

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ing specific examples. Parley Chase repeated the charge of the general affidavit, stating that Joseph Jr. "bore the reputation among his neighbors of being a liar" and was confident that his claim could be "corroborated by all his former neighbors."

4. Pardon Butts (1794-?) is listed as an overseer for Manchester road district No. 30 for 1830 and 1831 (Manchester Town Record, Manchester Town Hall, Manchester, New York). He married Ruth Lameon in 1817 (*Palmyra Register,* 31 December 1817) and is listed in the 1850 Manchester census as a fifty-six-year-old "Laborer" (1850:320). His daughter, Sylvia Walker, gave a statement to Arthur B. Deming in 1885 (see III.D.2, SYLVIA WALKER STATEMENT, 20 MAR 1885).

5. Warden A. Reed, in his thirties, is listed in the 1830 census of Macedon, Wayne County, New York (1830:100).

6. There is no Hiram Smith listed in either the 1830 or 1840 censuses of Manchester. But a Hiram Smith does appear as a highway overseer in Manchester (district No. 30) for the years 1829, 1834, and 1837 (Manchester Town Record, Manchester Town Hall, Manchester, New York; cf. microfilm copy, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah). The absence of this Hiram Smith from the 1830 census is probably explained by his not being the head of a household. Of the nine Smiths listed in the 1830 Manchester census, Shubel Smith is the only possible candidate for Hiram's father. The same census lists three sons for Shubel, all between twenty and thirty years of age. See also III.L.9, PALMYRA (NY) MASONIC RECORDS, 1827-1828.

7. Perhaps James Gee, in his thirties, listed in the 1840 census of Einfield, Thompkins County, New York (1840:314).

8. On Abel D. Chase (1814-90s), see introduction to III.B.7, ABEL CHASE INTERVIEW, 1881.

9. There is no Moses Smith listed in either the 1830 or 1840 censuses of Ontario County, New York. However, there is a Moses C. Smith, in his thirties, listed in the 1830 census of Shwangunk, Ulster County, New York (1830:245). Two other younger Moses Smiths, ages thirty and thirty-five, appear in the 1850 census of Walcott, Wayne County, New York (1850:530, 531). Hamilton Child's *History of Ontario County* lists a Moses Smith as a farmer in Manchester (Child 1867, 168), but it is unknown how long this

Joseph Fish,[10]
Horace N. Barnes,[11]
Silvester Worden.[12]

person had previously lived in that town.

10. Possibly the Joseph Fish, between twenty-six and forty-five years of age, listed in the 1820 census of Palmyra (1820:341); or the younger Joseph Fish, age thirty-nine, listed in the 1850 census of Manchester (1850:320).

11. Probably Horace Barnes, in his twenties, listed in the 1830 census of Galen, Wayne County, New York (1830:163), and in the 1850 census of Galen as a forty-six-year-old farmer (1850:338).

12. Perhaps Sylvester Worden, listed in the 1850 census of South Bristol, Ontario County, New York, as a thirty-two-year-old "Laborer" (1850:57).

2.
BARTON STAFFORD STATEMENT, 3 NOVEMBER 1833

Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 250-51.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Barton Stafford (c. 1808-?), a fish peddler and farmer, lived in Manchester, New York, south of the Smiths on Stafford Road (T. Cook 1930, 222; Child 1867, 168). He is listed in the 1850 census of Manchester as a forty-two-year-old "Fisherman" (1850:306), and in the 1860 census with his wife Abigail (1860:468).

Manchester, Ontario Co., N.Y. Nov. 3d, 1833.

Being called upon to give a statement of the character of the family of Joseph Smith, Sen. as far as I know, I can state that I became acquainted with them in 1820,[1] and knew them until 1831, when they left this neighborhood.—Joseph Smith, Sen.[2] was a noted drunkard[3] and most of the family followed his example, and Joseph, Jr. especially, who was very much addicted to intemperance.[4] In short, not one of the family had the least claims to respectability. Even since he professed to be inspired of the Lord to translate the Book of Mormon, he one day while at work in my father's field, got

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1. Probably when the Smiths moved into the Jennings cabin near the Palmyra/Manchester town line (see introduction to III.L.2, PALMYRA [NY] HIGHWAY SURVEY, 13 JUN 1820).

2. On Joseph Smith, Sr. (1771-1840), see "Introduction to Joseph Smith, Sr., Collection."

3. On Joseph Sr.'s drinking, see I.C.2, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., BLESSINGS, 1834, n. 11.

4. On Joseph Jr.'s drinking, see III.A.4, JOSHUA STAFFORD STATEMENT, 15 NOV 1833; III.A.12, DAVID STAFFORD STATEMENT, 5 DEC 1833; III.D.3, CHRISTOPHER M. STAFFORD STATEMENT, 23 MAR 1885; III.D.4, CORNELIUS R. STAFFORD STATEMENT, (23) MAR 1885; III.F.5, MARTIN HARRIS KIRTLAND (OH) HIGH COUNCIL HEARING, 12 FEB 1834; III.I.6, JESSE TOWNSEND TO PHINEAS STILES, 24 DEC 1833; and V.A.4, LEVI LEWIS STATEMENT, 1834.

quite drunk on a composition of cider, [p. 250] molasses and water. Finding his legs to refuse their office he leaned upon the fence and hung for sometime; at length recovering again, he fell to scuffling with one of the workmen, who tore his shirt nearly off from him. His wife who was at our house on a visit, appeared very much grieved at his conduct, and to protect his back from the rays of the sun, and conceal his nakedness, threw her shawl over his shoulders and in that plight escorted the Prophet home.[5] As an evidence of his piety and devotion, when intoxicated, he frequently made his religion the topic of conversation!!

BARTON STAFFORD.

State of New York, Wayne County, ss:

I certify that on the 9th day of December 1833, personally appeared before me, the above named Barton Stafford, to me known, and solemnly affirmed according to law, to the truth of the above statement and subscribed the same.

THOS. P. BALDWIN,[6]
a Judge of Wayne County Court.

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5. The event which Stafford describes apparently took place sometime after Joseph Smith's marriage to Emma Hale in January 1827 and before his departure from Manchester in December 1827. The story is repeated in III.B.11, JOHN STAFFORD INTERVIEW, 1881. Because Stafford fails to identify his source of information, whether observation or hearsay, some have questioned the veracity of his account (e.g., R. L. Anderson 1970, 291). The same event may have been described by Barton's cousin, Christopher M. Stafford, when he reported: "Jo got drunk while we were haying for my uncle, Wm. Stafford" (III.D.3, CHRISTOPHER M. STAFFORD STATEMENT, 23 MAR 1885). Despite some hesitancy, Barton Stafford's account is consistent with Smith's occasional drinking and fighting (see R. I. Anderson 1990, 32). David Stafford reported an instance when he personally scuffled with an intoxicated Joseph Smith (III.A.12, DAVID STAFFORD STATEMENT, 5 DEC 1833).

6. Thomas P. Baldwin (1790-1858) was a judge for Wayne County courts from February 1830 to February 1835 (Braden and Kelley 1884, 382-83). He was a vestryman in Palmyra's Zion Episcopal church (McIntosh 1877, 140, 143; T. Cook 1930, 253), and belonged to Palmyra's Mount Moriah Masonic Lodge ("Return of Mt. Moriah Lodge No. 112," 1828-31, Chancellor Livingston Library and Museum, Grand Lodge of New York, New York, New York). He died at Green Bay, Wisconsin (III.J.17, WILLIAM H. CUYLER STATEMENT, 1884; C. C. Baldwin 1881, 289).

3.
JOSEPH CAPRON STATEMENT, 8 NOVEMBER 1833

Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 258-60.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Joseph Capron (c. 1792-1874) lived south of the Smiths on Stafford Road. His name appears immediately before Joseph Smith Sr.'s in the 1830 census and was taxed for five acres of land on Manchester Lot 1 (the same lot on which the Smiths lived) (Manchester Assessment Records, Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York). He evidently moved to his residence on Stafford Road in 1827 when he said he first became acquainted with Joseph Smith, Sr., and acquired the deed to his land from neighbor Squire Stoddard in 1833 (Squire Stoddard to Joseph Capron, 1833, Deeds, Liber 53, 392, Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York). He is listed in the 1850 census of Manchester as a fifty-nine-year-old "Shoe Maker" (1850:310), and in the 1860 census with his wife Sabrina (1860:470). He died on 30 September 1874 (tombstone, Palmyra cemetery, Palmyra, New York).

Manchester, Ontario County, Nov. 8th, 1833.

I, Joseph Capron, became acquainted with Joseph Smith, Sen. in the year of our Lord, 1827. They have, since-then, been really a peculiar people—fond of the foolish and [p. 258] the marvelous—at one time addicted to vice and the grossest immoralities—at another time making the highest pretensions to piety and holy intercourse with Almighty God. The family of Smiths held Joseph Jr. in high estimation on account of some supernatural power, which he was supposed to possess. This power he pretended to have received through the medium of a stone of peculiar quality. The stone was placed in a hat, in such a manner as to exclude all light, except that which emanated from the stone itself. This light of the stone, he pretended, enabled him to see any thing he wished. Accordingly he discovered ghosts, infernal spirits, mountains of gold and silver, and many other invaluable treasures deposited in the earth. He would often tell his neighbors of his wonderful discoveries, and urge them to embark in the money digging business. Luxury and wealth were to be given to all who would adhere to his counsel. A gang

was soon assembled. Some of them were influenced by curiosity, others were sanguine in their expectations of immediate gain. I will mention one circumstance, by which the uninitiated may know how the company dug for treasures. The sapient Joseph discovered, north west of my house, a chest of gold watches; but, as they were in the possession of the evil spirit, it required skill and stratagem to obtain them. Accordingly, orders were given to stick a parcel of large stakes in the ground, several rods around, in a circular form. This was to be done directly over the spot where the treasures were deposited. A messenger was then sent to Palmyra to procure a polished sword: after which, Samuel F. Lawrence,[1] with a drawn sword in his hand, marched around to guard any assault which his Satanic majesty might be disposed to make. Meantime, the rest of the company were busily employed in digging for the watches. They worked as usual till quite exhausted. But, in spite of their brave defender, Law[p. 259]rence, and their bulwark of stakes, the devil came off victorious, and carried away the watches.[2] I might mention numerous schemes by which this young visionary and impostor had recourse to for the purpose of obtaining a livelihood. He, and indeed the whole of the family of Smiths, were notorious for indolence, foolery and falsehood. Their great object appeared to be, to live without work. While they were digging for money, they were daily harrassed by the demands of creditors, which they never were able to pay.[3] At length, Joseph pretended to find the Gold plates. This scheme, he believed, would relieve the family from all pecuniary embarrassment. His father told me, that when the book was published, they would be enabled, from the profits of the work, to carry into successful operation the money digging business. He gave me no intimation, at that time that the book was to be of a religious character, or that it had any thing to do with revelation.[4] He declared it to be a speculation, and said he, "when it is completed, my family will be placed *on a level* above the generality of mankind"!!

JOSEPH CAPRON.

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1. On Samuel Lawrence, see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, n. 147.

2. Regarding the search for watches in the area, compare III.A.4, JOSHUA STAFFORD STATEMENT, 15 NOV 1833. See also R. L. Anderson 1970, 291; R. I. Anderson 1990, 32-33.

3. See III.A.1, MANCHESTER RESIDENTS GROUP STATEMENT, 3 NOV 1833, n. 3.

4. Others similarly testified that the religious aspect of the gold plates was not at first clearly stated by the Smiths (see III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 3).

Eastern View of Main Street, Palmyra. Earliest known image of Palmyra Village. Engraving from John W. Barber and Henry Howe, *Historical Collections of the State of New York* (New York: S. Tuttle, 1841), 580.

4.
JOSHUA STAFFORD STATEMENT, 15 NOVEMBER 1833

Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 258.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Joshua Stafford (1798-1876), perhaps a nephew of William Stafford, lived in Manchester on Stafford Road about two miles south of the Smiths. He owned land on Manchester Lots 5 (until 1821 or 1822), 7, and 9 (see Manchester Assessment Records, Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York). Stafford, in his thirties, is listed in the 1830 census of Manchester (1830:169). He evidently moved with other family members to Geauga County, Ohio, probably in the 1830s. He died at Auburn, Geauga County, Ohio (Warren and Grosvenor 1985, 8).

Stafford was apparently involved with treasure seeking in the Manchester area. Isaac Butts reported that "Joshua Stafford, a good citizen, told me that young Jo Smith and himself dug for money in his orchard and elsewhere nights" (III.D.6, ISAAC BUTTS STATEMENT, CIRCA 1885). Caroline Rockwell Smith mentioned Joshua's use of a "peepstone" (III.D.5, CAROLINE ROCKWELL SMITH AFFIDAVIT, 25 MAR 1885), and Cornelius Stafford saw him with "Uncle John and Cousin Joshua Stafford" digging for treasure (III.D.4, CORNELIUS R. STAFFORD AFFIDAVIT, [23] MAR 1885).

Manchester, Ontario County, Nov. 15th, 1833.

I, Joshua Stafford, became acquainted with the family of Joseph Smith, Sen. about the year 1819 or 20.[1] They then were laboring people, in low circumstances. A short time after this, they commenced digging for hidden treasures, and soon after they became indolent, and told marvellous stories about ghosts, hob-goblins, caverns, and various other mysterious matters. Joseph once showed me a piece of wood which he said he took from a box

1. Probably when the Smiths moved into the Jennings cabin near the Palmyra/Manchester township line (see introduction to III.L.2, PALMYRA [NY] ROAD SURVEY, 23 JUN 1820).

of money, and the reason he gave for not obtaining the box, was, that it *moved*.[2] At another time, he, (Joseph, Jr.) at a husking, called on me to become security for a horse, and said he would reward me handsomely, for he had found a box of watches,[3] and they were as large as his fist, and he put one of them to his ear, and he could hear it "tick forty rods." Since he could not dispose of them profitably at Canandaigua or Palmyra, he wished to go east with them. He said if he did not return with the horse, I might take his life. I replied, that he knew I would not do that. Well, said he, I did not suppose you would, yet I would be willing that you should. He was nearly intoxicated at the time of the above conversation.[4]

JOSHUA STAFFORD.

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2. Compare III.K.30, BRIGHAM YOUNG ACCOUNT, 1877.

3. See III.A.3, JOSEPH CAPRON STATEMENT, 8 NOV 1833; and III.E.3, *PALMYRA REFLECTOR,* 1829-1831, under 7 July 1830.

4. On Joseph Jr.'s drinking, see III.A.2, BARTON STAFFORD STATEMENT, 3 NOV 1833, n. 4. Richard L. Anderson dismisses Stafford's testimony because he relies on second-hand information about Smith's money digging and Stafford was himself a money digger, "which renders such indirect evidence against Joseph Smith suspect" (R. L. Anderson 1970, 291). But Rodger I. Anderson argues, "[C]onsidering Smith's notoriety as a money digger, it would not be surprising that Stafford was less than eager to be counted among that 'selected audience of ignorant and superstitious persons' who were popularly regarded as Smith's 'dupes.' The fact that Stafford and Smith had dug for money together also indicates that Stafford was speaking from personal knowledge when he recounted the 'marvelous stories' Smith told 'about ghosts, hob-goblins, caverns, and various other mysterious matters.' It would likewise explain why Smith asked Stafford to provide security on a horse he wanted to borrow. ... Stafford was probably one of the few people in Manchester who would seriously consider accepting such unusual collateral" (R. I. Anderson 1990, 33). Despite this disagreement, Stafford does give from personal experience two examples of Smith's telling "marvellous stories."

5.
G. W. STODDARD STATEMENT, 28 NOVEMBER 1833

Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 260-61.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Probably George W. Stoddard, age sixty-two, listed in the 1850 census of Arcadia, Wayne County, New York, as a farmer (1850:277). He was perhaps the same "George Stoddard" who was baptized into the First Baptist Church of Palmyra in 1820, disfellowshiped "for immorral conduct (viz) for profane Swearing &c." in 1823, and reinstated in 1825 ("Book of Records for the first Baptist Church in Palmyra," 1813-28, Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, New York).

Palmyra, Nov. 28th, 1833.

Having been called upon to state a few facts which are material to the characters of some of the leaders of the Mormon sect, I will do so in a concise and plain manner. I have been acquainted with Martin Harris,[1] about thirty years. As a farmer, he was industrious and enterprising, so much so, that he had, (previous to his going into the Gold Bible speculation) accumulated, in real estate, some eight or ten thousand dollars. Although he possessed wealth, his moral and religious character was such, as not to entitle him to respect among his neighbors. He was fretful, peevish and quarrelsome, not only in the neighborhood, but in his family. He was known to frequently abuse [p. 260] his wife, by whipping her, kicking her out of bed and turning her out of doors &c.[2] Yet he was a public professor of some religion. He was first an orthadox Quaker, then a Universalist, next a Restorationer, then a Baptist, next a Presbyterian, and then a Mormon.[3] By his willingness to become all

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1. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

2. See III.A.7, LUCY HARRIS STATEMENT, 29 NOV 1833; and III.E.3, *PALMYRA REFLECTOR,* 1829-1831, under 22 June 1830.

3. There is no evidence that formally connects Harris with the Baptist or Presbyterian churches. Universalist and Restorationist could refer to personal belief, rather than to a specific organization. John A. Clark, former pas-

things to all men, he has attained a high standing among his Mormon brethren. The Smith family never made any pretentions to respectability.

G. W. STODARD.

I hereby concur in the above statement.

RICHARD H. FORD.[4]

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tor of Palmyra's Zion's Episcopal Church, said that before 1828 Harris "had occasionally attended divine service in our Church" and "had been, if I mistake not, at one period, a member of the Methodist Church, and subsequently had identified himself with the Universalist" (III.F.1, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH JOHN A. CLARK, 1827 & 1828). Harris himself said that in 1818 "I was Inspired of the Lord and Taught of the Spirit that I Should not Join Eny Church, although I Was anxiousley Sought for by meny of the Sectarians" (III.F.15, MARTIN HARRIS TESTIMONY, 4 SEP 1870, 1).

4. Richard Ford (1811-1906), a butcher by trade, moved to Palmyra, New York, in the 1820s. He died at Palmyra at age ninety-five (T. Cook 1930, 116).

6.
ABIGAIL HARRIS STATEMENT, 28 NOVEMBER 1833

Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 253-54.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Abigail ("Nabbie") Harris (?-?) was married to Peter Harris (1778-1849),[1] Lucy Harris's brother. Peter Harris is listed in the 1820 census of Palmyra (1820:336), but not in the 1830 census. In the 1820s the couple evidently lived near Palmyra, since in November 1825 Peter helped Lucy Harris transfer some of Martin's property into her own name (Gunnell 1955, 95). In the 1830s Peter and Abigail moved back to Palmyra and purchased a thirty-acre farm on the old tract belonging to Peter's father, Nathan Harris. (After Peter's death in 1849, the farm was sold to Nelson Lapham.) Abigail, in her sixties, is listed with her husband in the 1840 census of Palmyra, Wayne County, New York (1840:218). (On the Harrises, see also T. Cook 1930, 187-88; James 1983, 104, n. 31, 124, n. 100, 152, n. 229).

Palmyra, Wayne Co. N.Y. 11th mo[nth]. 28th, 1833.

In the early part of the winter in 1828,[2] I made a visit to Martin Harris'[3] and was joined in company by Jos[eph]. Smith, sen.[4] and his wife.[5] The Gold Bible business, so called, was the topic of conversation, to which I paid

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1. Peter Harris, a former sailor, became a Quaker minister after his move to Palmyra. He was also associated with the Rochester Quakers (T. Cook 1930, 187-88; James 1983, 124, n. 100, 152, n. 229; W. F. Peck 1884, 260).

2. This meeting with Martin Harris, Lucy Harris, Abigail Harris, Joseph Smith, Sr., and Lucy Smith took place after Joseph Jr. had left for Harmony, Pennsylvania, in December 1827 and before Martin made his first trip there in February 1828.

3. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

4. On Joseph Smith, Sr. (1771-1840), see "Introduction to Joseph Smith, Sr., Collection."

5. On Lucy Smith (1775-1856), see "Introduction to Lucy Smith Collection."

particular attention, that I might learn the truth of the whole matter.—They told me that the report that Joseph, jun. had found golden plates, was true, and that he was in Harmony, Pa. translating them—that such plates were in existence, and that Joseph, jun. was to obtain them, was revealed to him by the spirit[6] of one of the Saints that was on this continent, previous to its being discovered by Columbus. Old Mrs. Smith observed that she thought he must be a Quaker, as he was dressed very plain. They said that the plates he then had in possession were but an introduction to the Gold Bible—that all of them upon which the bible was written, were so heavy that it would take four stout men to load them into a cart—that Joseph had also discovered by looking through his stone, the vessel in which the gold was melted from which the plates were made, and also the machine with which they were rolled; he also discovered in the bottom of the vessel three balls of gold, each as large as his fist. The old lady said also, that after the book was translated, the plates were to be publicly exhibited—admitance 25 cents.[7] She calculated it would bring in annually an enormous sum of money—that money would then be very plenty, and the book would also sell for a great price, as it was something entirely new—that they had been commended to obtain all the money they could borrow for present necessity, and to repay with gold. The remainder was to be kept in store for the benefit of their family and children. This and the like conversation detained me until about 11 o'clock. Early the next morning, the mystery of the Spirit being like myself (one of the order called Friends) [p. 253] was reveal[ed] by the following circumstance: The old lady took me into another room, and after closing the door, she said, "have you four or five dollars in money that you can lend until our business is brought to a close? the spirit has said you shall receive four fold." I told her that when I gave, I did it not expecting to receive again—as for money I had none to lend. I then asked her what her particular want of money was; to which she replied, "Joseph wants to take the stage and come home from Pennsylvania to see what we are all about." To which I replied, he might look in his stone and save his time and money. The old lady seemed confused, and

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6. That the angelic messenger was a resurrected person was a later development in Smith's story (see I.A.14, JOSEPH SMITH ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS, 8 MAY 1838).

7. Concerning this claim, Dale Morgan commented: "Lucy's later history at Kirtland and Nauvoo, when she exhibited Joseph's Egyptian mummies and other odds and ends in exactly this way, leaves no room for doubt as to the substantial accuracy of these remarks" (J. P. Walker 1986, 385, n. 59).

left the room, and thus ended the visit.

In the second month following,[8] Martin Harris and his wife were at my house. In conversation about Mormonites, she observed, that she wished her husband would quit them, as she believed it was all false and a delusion. To which I hea[r]d Mr. Harris reply: "*What if it is a lie: if you will let me alone I will make money out of it!.*["] I was both an eye and an ear witness of what has been stated above, which is now fresh in my memory, and I give it to the world for the good of mankind.[9] I speak the truth and lie not, God bearing me witness.

ABIGAIL HARRIS.

8. This visit evidently took place in March 1828 before Martin Harris left for his second trip to Harmony to assist in translating the gold plates, which began on 12 April 1828 (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 9).

9. Lucy Harris corroborated this claim (III.A.7, LUCY HARRIS STATEMENT, 29 NOV 1833, 256).

7.
LUCY HARRIS STATEMENT, 29 NOVEMBER 1833

Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 254-57.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Lucy Harris (1792-1837), daughter of Rufus and Lucy Harris, was probably born at Palmyra, New York. In 1808 she married Martin Harris, her first cousin. Pomeroy Tucker described her as "a Quakeress of positive qualities" (III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 41). She was a strong-willed, independent woman, who in 1825 demanded eighty acres and a house apart from her husband and controlled a portion of his finances (see introduction to III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829). Lucy strongly resented her husband's involvement with Joseph Smith and is suspected of stealing and burning the manuscript that Smith and her husband had produced in 1828 (see introduction to III.L.16, BOOK OF MORMON PREFACE, 1829). The Harrises separated when Martin followed Smith to Ohio. According to Thomas L. Cook, Lucy Harris's property was situated "on the Macedon Center road known as the Marvin Hill farm, now the John Coveney farm" (T. Cook 1930, 206). She died at Palmyra (see Jessee 1989, 490).

Palmyra, Nov. 29, 1833.

Being called upon to give a statement to the world of what I know respecting the Gold Bible speculation, and also of the conduct of Martin Harris,[1] my husband, who is a leading character among the Mormons, I do it free from prejudice, realizing that I must give an account at the bar of God for what I say. Martin Harris was once industrious attentive to his domestic concerns, and thought to be worth about ten thousand dollars. He is naturally quick in his temper and in his mad-fits frequently abuses all who may dare to [p. 254] oppose him in his wishes. However strange it may seem, I have been a great sufferer by his unreasonable conduct. At different times while I

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1. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

live with him, he has whipped, kicked, and turned me out of the house. About a year previous to the report being raised that Smith had found gold plates, he became very intimate with the Smith family, and said he believed Joseph could see in his stone any thing he wished. After this he apparently became very sanguine in his belief, and frequently said he would have no one in his house that did not believe in Mormonism; and because I would not give credit to the report he made about the gold plates, he became more austere towards me. In one of his fits of rage he struck me with the but end of a whip, which I think had been used for driving oxen, and was about the size of my thumb, and three or four feet long. He beat me on the head four or five times, and the next day turned me out of doors twice, and beat me in a shameful manner.—The next day I went to the town of Marion, and while there my flesh was black and blue in many places.[2] His main complaint against me was, that I was always trying to hinder his making money.

When he found out that I was going to Mr. Putnam's,[3] in Marion, he said he was going too, that they had sent for him to pay them a visit. On arriving at Mr. Putnam's, I asked them if they had sent for Mr. Harris; they replied, they knew nothing about it; he, however, came in the evening. Mrs. Putnam told him never to strike or abuse me any more; he then denied ever striking me; she was however convinced that he lied, as the marks of his beating me were plain to be seen, and remained more than two weeks. Whether the Mormon religion be true or false, I leave the world to judge, for its effects upon Martin Harris have been to make him more cross, turbulent and abusive to me. His whole object was to make money by it. I will give one [p. 255] circumstance in proof of it. One day, while at Peter Harris'[4] house, I told him he had better leave the company of the Smiths, as their religion was false; to which he replied, if you would let me alone, I could make money by it.[5]

It is in vain for the Mormons to deny these facts; for they are all well known to most of his former neighbors. The man has now become rather an object of pity; he has spent most of his property, and lost the confidence

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2. Regarding Martin's brutality towards his wife, see III.A.5, G. W. STODDARD STATEMENT, 28 NOV 1833; and III.E.3, *PALMYRA REFLECTOR*, 1829-1831, under 22 June 1830.

3. Probably Cornelius Putnam, in his forties, listed in the 1830 Marion, Wayne County, New York, census (1830:3).

4. On Peter Harris (1778-1849), see introduction to III.A.6, ABIGAIL HARRIS STATEMENT, 28 NOV 1833, and n. 1.

5. This claim was corroborated by Abigail Harris (see III.A.6, ABIGAIL HARRIS STATEMENT, 28 NOV 1833, 254).

of his former friends. If he had labored as hard on his farm as he has to make Mormons, he might now be one of the wealthiest farmers in the country. He now spends his time in travelling through the country spreading the delusion of Mormonism, and has no regard whatever for his family.

With regard to Mr. Harris' being intimate with Mrs. Haggard,[6] as has been reported,[7] it is but justice to myself to state what facts have come within my own observation, to show whether I had any grounds for jealousy or not. Mr. Harris was very intimate with this family, for some time previous to their going to Ohio. They lived a while in a house which he had built for their accommodation, and here he spent the most of his leisure hours; and made her presents of articles from the store and house. He carried these presents in a private manner, and frequently when he went there, he would pretend to be going to some of the neighbors, on an errand, or to be going into the fields.—After getting out of sight of the house, he would steer a straight course for Haggard's house, especially if Haggard was from home. At times when Haggard was from home, he would go there in the manner above described, and stay till twelve or one o'clo[c]k at night, and sometimes until day light.

If his intentions were evil, the Lord will judge him accordingly, but if good, he did not mean to let his left hand [p. 256] know what his right hand did.[8] The above statement of facts, I affirm to be true.

LUCY HARRIS.

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6. Probably the wife of Daniel P. Haggart, whose name appears two names above Martin Harris's in the 1830 census of Palmyra (1830:51). The 1830 census lists him (in his thirties), his wife (in her twenties), and three children (under age ten). He is probably the same Daniel Haggart (age fifty-five), a blacksmith, listed in the 1850 census of Willoughby, Lake County, Ohio, with his Canadian-born wife, Magdaline (age forty-six) (1850:169). The Ohio census also suggests that the Haggarts moved from New York after 1829, following the birth of their daughter Sarah and before the birth of Bruithia in Ohio about 1832.

7. Because Lucy Harris is unique in reporting her husband's relationship with Mrs. Haggart, Lucy presumably used the phrase "as has been reported" in the verbal, rumor, or gossip sense rather than in the printed or published sense.

8. In March 1830 a revelation addressed Martin Harris's belief in universal salvation and issued a warning: "I command thee that thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife; nor seek thy neighbor's life" (D&C 19:25). See also V.A.4, LEVI LEWIS STATEMENT, 1834.

8.
ROSWELL NICHOLS STATEMENT, 1 DECEMBER 1833

Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 257-58.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Roswell Nichols probably became acquainted with the Smith family in April 1829 when he and his wife Mary Durfee (1799-1883), the daughter of Lemuel Durfee,[1] moved into the Smiths' former house, from which the latter had been evicted. With the loss of their home, the Smiths were forced to move in with Hyrum and his family into the small cabin they had previously occupied (see III.L.4, SMITH MANCHESTER [NY] LAND RECORDS, 1820-1830). Thus Nichols became a close neighbor to the Smiths during the last twenty months of their residence in Manchester. He is listed in the 1830 census of Manchester, Ontario County, New York, as being in his thirties (1830:170; see also 1840:76). In 1830 and 1833, he was taxed for 100 acres on Manchester Lot 1 (Manchester Assessment Records, Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York). On 9 April 1834 the executors of Lemuel Durfee's estate deeded the Smiths' former property to Mary Nichols (Deeds, Liber 55, 558, Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York).

Manchester, Ontario County, Dec. 1st, 1833.

I, Roswell Nichols, first became acquainted with the family of Joseph Smith, Sen. nearly five years ago,[2] and I lived a neighbor to the said family about two years.[3] My acquaintance with the family has enabled me to know

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1. In his last will and testament, dated 12 June 1826, Lemuel Durfee mentioned his daughter "Mary Nichols" (Wills, Book A, 225, Wayne County Clerk's Office, Lyons, New York). On Mary Durfee, see "Record of the family of Job Durfee," Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York.

2. Probably in April 1829.

3. The Smiths occupied the nearby cabin from April 1829 to about October or November 1830 (see III.L.4, SMITH MANCHESTER [NY] LAND RECORDS, 1820-1830).

something of its character for good citizenship, probity and veracity—For breach of contacts, for the non-payment of debts and borrowed money, and for duplicity with their neighbors, the family was notorious. Once, since the Gold Bible speculation commenced, the old man was sued; and while the sheriff was at his house, he lied to him and was detected in the falsehood. Before he left the house, he confessed that it was sometimes necessary for him to tell an honest lie, in order to live.[4] At another time, he told me that he had received an express command for me to repent and believe as he did, or I must be damned. I refused to comply, and at the same time told him of the various impositions of his family. He then stated their digging was not for money but it was for the obtaining of a Gold Bible. Thus contradicting what he had told me before: for he had often said, that the hills in our neighborhood were nearly all erected by human hands—that they were all full of gold and silver. And one time, when we were talking on the subject, he pointed to a small hill on my farm,[5] and said, "in that hill there is a stone which is full of gold and silver. I know it to be so, for I have been to the hole, and God said unto me, *go not in now, but at a future day you shall go in and find the book open, and then you shall have the treasures.*"[6] He said that gold and silver was once as plenty as the stones in the field are now—that the ancients, half of them melted the ore and made the gold and silver, while the other [p. 257] half buried it deeper in the earth, which accounted for these hills. Upon my enquiring who furnished the food for the whole, he flew into a passion, and called me a sinner, and said he, "you must be eternally damned."

I mention these facts, not because of their intrinsic importance, but simply to show the weak mindedness and low character of the man.

ROSWELL NICHOLS.

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4. For Joseph Sr.'s legal difficulties, see discussion in III.A.1, MANCHESTER RESIDENTS GROUP STATEMENT, 3 NOV 1833, n. 3.

5. Probably the hill east of the Smiths' former home (see also III.A.9, PETER INGERSOLL STATEMENT, 2 DEC 1833).

6. The story about the cave and the open book is similar to what Brigham Young was told Oliver Cowdery had said about the Book of Mormon (see III.K.30, BRIGHAM YOUNG ACCOUNT, 1877). Because early accounts of Joseph Jr.'s obtaining the plates included elements of folk magic and treasure-seeking lore, especially as related by Joseph Smith, Sr. (see I.C.1, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., INTERVIEW WITH FAYETTE LAPHAM, 1830), it is easy to understand Nichols's difficulty in separating the two activities.

9.
PETER INGERSOLL STATEMENT, 2 DECEMBER 1833

Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 232-37, 248-49.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Peter Ingersoll (c. 1789-1867), son of Francis Ingersoll (b. 1758), was born in Washington County, New York. He appears along with his wife, Catherine Todd (1787-1858), and nine children in the 1830 census of Palmyra, Wayne County, New York, under the name "Peter Ingerson" (1830:50). According to Lorenzo Saunders, Ingersoll's "land joined the Smith farm on the north" (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 6), and quite possibly he lived in the cabin that the Smiths had first occupied prior to building their own cabin on their Manchester land. The probate records of Samuel Jennings, who died in 1821, lend insight into Ingersoll's affairs in the 1820s. Regarding the settlement of Jennings's estate on 8 February 1832, the record states:

> Peter Ingersoll testifies, that Samuel Jennings owned property, real estate out of the village of Palmyra, at his death, 125 acres in the town of Palmyra with but a little improvement on it, 80 acres north of the village without any improvement at that time—200 acres in Williamson, Wayne County—that witness went on to the 120 acre lot under a contract with the administration in April 1822, by which he was to hold the land 19 years, and as an equivalent for the use he was to clear 60 acres and fence it, put on an orchard and pay the taxes. That the land is now worth $20 per acre. That the 120 acre lot was leased to one [Carr?] by the administration, on simi=lar terms, except that he was to clear half of the land and erect a house and barn on the premises. ... (Probate Records, 24:8-9, Wayne County Courthouse, Lyons, New York).

Ingersoll claimed to have been a close friend of the Smith family. His association with the Smiths is confirmed by Lorenzo Saunders, who mentioned seeing Ingersoll at the Smith residence in 1827 (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 3), and Martin Harris, who remembered Joseph Jr. working for Ingersoll soon after getting the plates (III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY,

1859, 168-69). Ingersoll also evidently owned land near Palmyra Village, which was sold in 1836 to satisfy a judgment (see R. L. Anderson 1970, 297). About this time Ingersoll moved to Holly, Genesee County, Michigan, where he purchased forty acres of land (*First Land Owners of Oakland County, Michigan,* 1981, 24). In 1840 and 1850, he appears in the censuses of neighboring Groveland, Oakland County, Michigan (1840:139; 1850:672). Finally, the seventy-three-year-old Ingersoll is listed in the 1860 census of Flint, Genesee County, Michigan, in the household of Ira Wright, who had married Ingersoll's daughter Marietta in 1842 (1860:988; *History of Genesee County, Michigan,* 1879, 184). He died at Flint, Michigan, on 22 April 1867 (Avery 1926, 58). See also III.K.34, SARA MELISSA INGERSOLL REMINISCENCE, 1899.

Palmy[r]aa, Wayne Co. N.Y. Dec. 2d, 1833.

I, Peter Ingersoll, first became acquainted with the family of Jopesh [Joseph] Smith, Sen. in the year of our Lord, 1822.—I lived in the neighborhood of said family, until about 1830; during which time the following facts came under my observation.

The general employment of the family, was digging for money. I had frequent invitations to join the company, but always declined being one of their number. They used various arguments to induce me to accept of their invitations. I was once ploughing near the house of Joseph Smith, Sen.[1] about noon, he requested me to walk with him a short distance from his house, for the purpose of seeing whether a mineral rod[2] would work in my hand, saying at the same time he was confident it would. As my oxen were eating, and being myself at leisure, I accepted the invitation.—When we arrived near the place at which he thought there was money, he cut a small witch hazle bush and gave me direction how to hold it. He then went off some rods, and told me to say to the rod, "work to the money," which I did, in an audible voice. He rebuked me severely for speaking it loud, and said it must be spoken in a whisper. This was rare sport for me. While the old man was standing off some rods, throwing himself into various shapes, I told him the rod did not work. He seemed much surprised at this, and said he thought he saw it move in my hand. It was now time for me to return to my labor. On my [p. 232] return, I picked up a stone and was carelessly tossing it from one hand to the

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1. On Joseph Smith, Sr. (1771-1840), see "Introduction to Joseph Smith, Sr., Collection."

2. For corroborative evidence of Joseph Smith Sr.'s use of divining rods, see I.G.1, JESSE SMITH TO HYRUM SMITH, 17 JUN 1829.

other. Said he, (looking very earnestly) what are you going to do with that stone? Throw it at the birds, I replied. No, said the old man, it is of great worth; and upon this I gave it to him. Now, says he, if you only knew the value there is back of my house,[3] (and pointing to a place near)—*there,* exclaimed he, is one chest of gold and another of silver. He then put the stone which I had given him, into his hat, and stooping forward, he bowed and made sundry maneuvers, quite similar to those of a stool pigeon. At length he took down his hat, and being very much exhausted, said, in a faint voice, "if you knew what I had seen, you would believe." To see the old man thus try to impose upon me, I confess, rather had a tendency to excite contempt than pity. Yet I thought it best to conceal my feelings, preferring to appear the dupe of my credulity,[4] than to expose myself to his resentment. His son Alvin then went through with the same performance, which was equally disgusting.[5]

Another time, the said Joseph, Sen. told me that the best time for digging money, was, in the heat of summer, when the heat of the sun caused the chests of money to rise near the top of the ground. You notice, said he, the large stones on the top of the ground—we call them rocks, and they truly appear so, but they are, in fact, most of them chests of money raised by the heat of the sun.

At another time, he told me that the ancient inhabitants of this country used camels instead of horses. For proof of this fact, he stated that in a certain hill on the farm of Mr. Cuyler, there was a cave containing an immense value

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3. Ingersoll's repeated reference to the Smith "house" is probably the result of his faulty memory since construction of the frame house was not begun until November 1823, the same month that Alvin died (see III.L.4, SMITH MANCHESTER [NY] LAND RECORDS, 1820-1830). Joseph Sr. probably had reference to the hill east of the Smith home, which he also told Roswell Nichols contained treasure (see III.A.8, ROSWELL NICHOLS STATEMENT, 1 DEC 1833).

4. Perhaps a response to the claim that Ingersoll once had faith in the Smiths' treasure-searching gifts. Pomeroy Tucker, for example, reported that Ingersoll "had believingly taken part in Smith's money-digging operations, and was at first inclined to put faith in his 'Golden Bible' pretension" (III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 128).

5. Alvin's presence necessarily places this event in 1822 or 1823. On Alvin Smith (1798-1823), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 10. Alvin's participation in treasure seeking is attested to by Lorenzo Saunders, who said Willard Chase told him that he and Alvin had once dug for treasure together (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 9).

of gold and silver, stands of arms, also, a saddle for a camel, hanging on a peg at one side of the cave. I asked him, of what kind of wood the peg was. He could not tell, but said it had become similar to stone or iron. [p. 233]

The old man at last laid a plan which he thought would accomplish his design. His cows and mine had been gone for some time, and were not to be found, notwithstanding our diligent search for them. Day after day was spent in fruitless search, until at length he proposed to find them by his art of divination. So he took his stand near the corner of his house, with a small stick in his hand, and made several strange and peculiar motions, and then said he could go directly to the cows. So he started off, and went into the woods about one hundred rods distant and found the lost cows. But on finding out the secret of the mystery, Harrison[6] had found the cows, and drove them to the above named place, and milked them.[7] So that this stratagem turned out rather more to his profit that it did to my edification.— The old man finding that all his efforts to make me a money digger, had proved abortive, at length ceased his importunities. One circumstance, however, I will mention before leaving him. Some time before young Joseph found, or pretended to find, the gold plates, the old man told me that in Canada, there had been a book found, in a hollow tree, that gave an account of the first settlement of this country before it was discovered by Columbus.[8]

In the month of August, 1827, I was hired by Joseph Smith, Jr. to go to Pennsylvania, to move his wife's household furniture up to Manchester,[9] where his wife then was. When we arrived at Mr. [Isaac] Hale's,[10] in Harmony, Pa. from which place he had taken his wife, a scene presented itself, truly affecting. His father-in-law (Mr. Hale) addressed Joseph, in a flood of tears: "You have stolen my daughter and married her.[11] I had much rather

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6. On Samuel Harrison Smith (1808-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 13.

7. Although cleared of the charge, Ingersoll was himself sued for stealing a cow and milking it while manipulating its discovery (Nathan Pierce Docket Book [1827-30], under 26 May 1830, Manchester Township Office, Clifton Springs, New York; cf. R. L. Anderson 1970, 298, n. 28).

8. This claim has yet to be verified.

9. That Ingersoll accompanied Joseph and Emma to Harmony, Pennsylvania, was confirmed by Isaac Hale (see V.A.1, ISAAC HALE STATEMENT, 1834).

10. On Isaac Hale (1763-1839), see introduction to V.A.1, ISAAC HALE STATEMENT, 1834.

11. For Smith's response to this charge, see I.A.14, JOSEPH SMITH ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS, 8 MAY 1838.

have followed her to her grave. You spend your time in digging for money—pretend to see in a stone, and thus try to deceive people." Joseph wept, and acknowledged he could not see in a stone now, nor never could; and that his former pretentions in [p. 234] that respect, were all false.[12] He then promised to give up his old habits of digging for money and looking into stones. Mr. Hale told Joseph, if he would move to Pennsylvania and work for a living, he would assist him in getting into business. Joseph acceded to this proposition.[13] I then returned with Joseph and his wife to Manchester. One circumstance occurred on the road, worthy of notice, and I believe this is the only instance where Jo ever exhibited true yankee wit. On our journey to Pennsylvania, we could not make the exact change at the toll gate near Ithaca. Joseph told the gate tender, that he would "hand" him the toll on his return, as he was coming back in a few days. On our return, Joseph tendered to him 25 cents, the toll being 12 1/2. He did not recognize Smith, so he accordingly gave him back 12 1/2 cents. After we had passed the gate, I asked him if he did not agree to pay double gatage on our return? No, said he, I agreed to "*hand*" it to him, and I did, but he handed it back again.

Joseph told me on his return, that he intended to keep the promise which he had made to his father-in-law: but, said he, it will be hard for me, for they will all oppose, as they want me to look in the stone for them to dig money: and in fact it was as he predicted. They urged him, day after day, to resume his old practice of looking in the stone.—He seemed much perplexed as to the course he should pursue. In this dilemma, he made me his confident and told me what daily transpired in the family of Smiths. One day he came, and greeted me with a joyful countenance.—Upon asking the cause of his unusual happiness, he replied in the following language: "As I was passing, yesterday, across the woods, after a heavy shower of rain, I found, in a hollow, some beautiful white sand, that had been washed up by the water. I took off my frock, and tied up several quarts of it, and then went home. On my entering the [p. 235] house, I found the family at the table eating dinner. They were all anxious to know the contents of my frock. At that moment,

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12. Alva Hale quoted Smith as saying "that this '*peeping*' was all d—d nonsense. He (Smith) was deceived himself but did not intend to deceive others" (V.A.2, ALVA HALE STATEMENT, 1834).

13. Isaac Hale gave an independent account of the same conversation, "Smith stated to me, that he had given up what he called 'glass-looking,' and that he expected to work hard for a living, and was willing to do so," and Hale's son Alva remembered Smith as saying "that he intended to quit the business, (of peeping) and labor for his livelihood" (V.A.1, ISAAC HALE STATEMENT, 1834; V.A.2, ALVA HALE STATEMENT, 1834).

I happened to think of what I had heard about a history found in Canada, called the golden Bible; so I very gravely told them it was the golden Bible. To my surprise, they were credulous enough to believe what I said. Accordingly I told them that I had received a commandment to let no one see it, for, says I, no man can see it with the naked eye and live. However, I offered to take out the book and show it to them, but they refuse[d] to see it, and left the room." Now, said Jo, "I have got the damned fools fixed, and will carry out the fun."[14] Notwithstanding, he told me he had no such book, and believed there never was any such book, yet, he told me that he actually went to Willard Chase,[15] to get him to make a chest, in which he might deposit his golden Bible. But, as Chase would not do it,[16] he made a box himself, of clap-boards, and put it into a pillow case, and allowed people only to lift it, and feel of it through the case.

In the fall of 1827,[17] Joseph wanted to go to Pennsylvania. His brother-in-law [Alva Hale] had come to assist him in moving, but he himself was out of money. He wished to borrow the money of me, and he presented Mr. Hale as security. I told him in case he could obtain assistance from no other source, I would let him have some money. Joseph then went to Palmyra; and, said he, I there met that dam fool, Martin Harris, and told him

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14. Regarding Smith's supposed confession to Ingersoll, there has been a great deal of skepticism from all sides. Rodger I. Anderson has suggested that "Ingersoll created the story as a way of striking back at Smith for his own gullibility in swallowing a story he later became convinced was a hoax" (R. I. Anderson 1990, 56; see also R. L. Anderson 1970, 298). Despite such reluctance to accept Ingersoll's account at face value, had he invented Smith's confession it is doubtful that he would at the same time weaken its effect by casting doubt upon it himself. Even Ingersoll was quite puzzled by Joseph's confession as it seemed to contradict his later effort to get a box made. It is possible that Smith told Ingersoll the story privately in an effort to discourage those who repeatedly attempted to take the plates from him. Ingersoll may have been among the witnesses who testified against Smith at Lyons in March 1829. According to Lucy Smith, a witness testified falsely that "Joseph Smith told him that the box which he had, contained nothing but sand; and he, Joseph Smith, said it was gold, to deceive the people" (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, 1853:133-34).

15. On Willard Chase (1798-1871), see introduction to III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833.

16. This was confirmed by Willard Chase (III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 245).

17. Rather Joseph Smith left Manchester, New York, in December 1827 (see I.A.7, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1832, 5).

that I had a command to ask the first *honest man* I met with, for fifty dollars in money, and he would let me have it.[18] I saw at once, said Jo, that it took his notion, for he promptly gave me the fifty.

Joseph thought this sum was sufficient to bear his expenses to Pennsylvania. So he immediately started off, and since that time I have not been much in his society. While the Smiths were living at Waterloo, William[19] visited my [p. 236] neighborhood, and upon my inquiry how they came on, he replied, "we do better there than here; we were too well known here to do much.["]

PETER INGERSOLL.

State of New York, Wayne County, ss:

I certify, that on this 9th day of December, 1833, personally appeared before me the above named Peter Ingersoll, to me known, and made oath, according to law, to the truth of the above statement.

TH[OMAS]. P. BALDWIN,
Judge of Wayne County Court.

[*Additional Certification*][20]

Palmyra, December 13th, 1833.

I certify that I have been personally acquainted with Peter Ingersoll for a number of years, and believe him to be a man of strict integrity, truth and veracity.

DURFEY CHASE.[21]

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18. Compare III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 246, and III.I.6, JESSE TOWNSEND TO PHINEAS STILES, 24 DEC 1833, 289.

19. On William Smith (1811-93), see "Introduction to William Smith Collection."

20. Additional certification for Ingersoll's statement (as well as the statements of William Stafford and Willard Chase) is here reproduced from pages 248-49 of Howe's book. See also III.A.13, WILLIAM STAFFORD STATEMENT, 8 DEC 1833; and III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833.

21. On Durfee Chase, see III.A.11, PALMYRA RESIDENTS GROUP STATEMENT, 4 DEC 1833, n. 23.

Palmyra, December 4th, 1833.[22]

I am acquainted with William Stafford and Peter Ingersoll, and believe them to be men of truth and veracity.

J. S. COLT.[23]

Palmyra, December 4th, 1833.

We the undersigned, are personally acquainted with [p. 248] William Stafford, Willard Chase and Peter Ingersoll, and believe them to be men of truth and veracity.

GEORGE BECKWITH.[24]
NATH'L. H. BECKWITH.[25]
THOMAS ROGERS, 2d.[26]
MARTIN W. WILCOX.[27]

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22. The date 4 December for this certification, as well as the one that follows, is problematic since William Stafford's statement is dated four days later and notarized by Thomas P. Baldwin on 9 December. It is not likely that Hurlbut would seek testimony regarding the character of William Stafford, Peter Ingersoll, and Willard Chase until after he had taken their statements. It is probable, therefore, that the two certifications were actually taken on 14 December. Note that Durfee Chase's certification of Peter Ingersoll's statement, which appears immediately before the above named certificates, is dated 13 December 1833.

23. Joseph S. Colt, son of Joseph Colt, took over his father's grocery store business when he died in 1831. He subsequently sold out and moved to Erie, then to Albany, New York (T. Cook 1930, 73).

24. On George Beckwith, see III.A.11, PALMYRA RESIDENTS GROUP STATEMENT, 4 DEC 1833, n. 37.

25. On Nathaniel H. Beckwith, see III.A.11, PALMYRA RESIDENTS GROUP STATEMENT, 4 DEC 1833, n. 25.

26. On Thomas Rogers II, see III.A.11, PALMYRA RESIDENTS GROUP STATEMENT, 4 DEC 1833, n. 32.

27. Martin W. Wilcox (?-1846) was appointed post master of Palmyra on 16 August 1829. He also served as town clerk for Palmyra from 1837 until his death (T. Cook 1930, 264, 283).

10.
PARLEY CHASE STATEMENT, 2 DECEMBER 1833

Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 248.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Parley Chase (1806-?), son of Clark and Phebe Chase, was born at Manchester, New York (Reed 1902, 1:214). Sometime after 1833 he moved to Rollin, Michigan, where he was living in 1879 (see III.J.11, PARLEY CHASE TO [JAMES T. COBB?], 3 APR 1879).

Manchester, December 2d, 1833.

I was acquainted with the family of Joseph Smith, Sen., both before and since they became Mormons, and feel free to state that not one of the male members of the Smith family were entitled to any credit, whatsoever. They were lazy, intemperate and worthless men, very much addicted to lying. In this they frequently boasted of their skill. Digging for money was their principal employment. In regard to their Gold Bible speculation, they scarcely ever told two stories alike. The Mormon Bible is said to be a revelation from God, through Joseph Smith Jr., his Prophet, and this same Joseph Smith Jr. to my knowledge, bore the reputation among his neighbors of being a liar. The foregoing statement can be corroborated by all his former neighbors.

PARLEY CHASE.

11.
PALMYRA RESIDENTS GROUP STATEMENT, 4 DECEMBER 1833

Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 261-62.

EDITORIAL NOTE

As with the general Manchester affidavit, Hurlbut probably authored the Palmyra group statement. Concerning the sixty-two signers of Hurlbut's two documents, E. W. Vanderhoof correctly observed: "Any old resident of Palmyra or Manchester will recognize among the signatures the names of the best people living at that time in those towns" (Vanderhoof 1907, 136). This is especially true of the fifty-one singers of the Palmyra statement, which brings up the concern expressed by Marvin S. Hill that many of the ratifiers were "far above the Smiths in social rank and community status" and therefore had little first-hand information about the Smiths and "probably did not know them well" (M. Hill 1990, 73-74). Indeed, as Hill observed, the Palmyra residents only testified to what the Smiths were "considered" to be, not necessarily to first-hand information, although a number of the signers may well have had substantial contact with various members of the Smith family and with Martin Harris.

Palmyra, Dec. 4, 1833.

We, the undersigned, have been acquainted with the Smith family, for a number of years, while they resided near this place, and we have no hesitation in saying, that we consider them destitute of that moral character, which ought to entitle them to the confidence of any community. They were particularly famous for visionary projects, spent much of their time in digging for money which they pretended was hid in the earth; and to this day, large excavations may be seen in the earth, not far from their residence, where they used to spend their time in digging for hidden treasures. Joseph Smith, Senior,[1] and his son Joseph, were in particular, considered entirely

1. On Joseph Smith, Sr. (1771-1840), see "Introduction to Joseph Smith, Sr., Collection."

destitute of *moral character, and addicted to vicious habits.*[2]

Martin Harris was a man who had acquired a handsome property, and in matters of business his word was considered good; but on moral and religious subjects, he was perfectly visionary—sometimes advocating one sentiment, and sometimes another.[3] And in reference to all with whom we were acquainted, that have embraced Mormonism from this neighborhood, we are compeled to say, were very visionary, and most of them destitute of moral character, and without [p. 261] influence in this community; and this may account why they were permitted to go on with their impositions undisturbed. It was not supposed that any of them were possessed of sufficient character or influence to make any one believe their book or their sentiments, and we know not of a single individual in this vicinity that puts the least confidence in their pretended revelations.

Geo. N. Williams,[4]
Clark Robinson,
Lemael Durfee,[5]
E. S. Townsend,[6]
Henry P. Alger,

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2. The term "vicious habits" likely includes the charge of excessive drinking (see discussion in III.A.1, MANCHESTER RESIDENTS GROUP STATEMENT, 3 NOV 1833, n. 2).

3. See III.A.5, G. W. STODDARD STATEMENT, 28 NOV 1833.

4. George N. Williams (1797-1867) was a store keeper and an elder in Palmyra's Western Presbyterian Church (McIntosh 1877, 141; III.L.20, PALMYRA [NY] PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH RECORDS, MAR 1830). He is listed in the 1840 Federal Census of Palmyra, New York, in his forties (1840:215).

5. Lemuel Durfee, Jr., son of the Lemuel Durfee who became owner of the Smith farm in December 1825, was a prominent Quaker (T. Cook 1930, 188, 191, 210, 258). After the death of Lemuel Durfee, Sr., in 1829, sons Oliver and Lemuel Jr., as executors of their father's estate, filed a complaint against Joseph Smith, Sr., and Abraham Fish for $39.92 for an unpaid note (see III.L.18, LEMUEL DURFEE PROBATE PAPERS, 1830). He is listed in the 1840 census of Macedon, Wayne County, New York, as being in his thirties (1840:182). He became a supervisor of Macedon in 1857 (McIntosh 1877, 118).

6. Edward S. Townsend, son of Jesse Townsend, was married to Ruth Durfee, sister of Lemuel Durfee, Sr. In 1828 he took over a rope business in Palmyra. He also served as a trustee of Palmyra's Democrat School (T. Cook 1930, 179, 180, 266). He is listed in the 1830 census of Palmyra, New York, in his thirties (1830:52).

C. E. Thayer,[7]
G. W. Anderson,
H. P. Thayer,[8]
L. Williams,
Geo. W. Crosby,
Levi Thayer,[9]
R. S. Williams,[10]
P. Sexton,[11]
M. Butterfield,[12]
S. P. Seymour,[13]

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7. Perhaps Christopher E. Thayer (1806-39) mentioned in the Village Minutes as a clerk in 1835.

8. Perhaps Hiram P. Thayer (1806-66), son of Joel Thayer.

9. Levi Thayer (or Thayre) (1787-1857) was in the ashery and pork-packing business with his twin brother Joel. They owned several buildings along the canal and ran several canal boats (T. Cook 1930, 36, 76). He is listed in the 1840 census of Palmyra, New York, in his fifties (1840:217). The Smiths evidently had dealings with the Thayre brothers (see III.J.23, WILLIAM HYDE INTERVIEWS, 1888; III.L.11, JOSEPH SMITH TO ABRAHAM FISH ACCOUNT, 10 MAR 1827). See note 42 below.

10. Probably Richard S. Williams (1802-79), son of Palmyra merchant Zebulon Williams (McIntosh 1877, 141). Perhaps also Richard S. Williams (in his forties) listed in the 1830 Arcadia, Wayne County, New York, census (1830:72).

11. Pliny Sexton (1796-1881), a Quaker, was born at Springfield, Massachusetts. He moved to Palmyra with his parents about 1799. In 1825 he erected the James Jenner block that housed several businesses, including a furniture factory and store. He was a jeweler by trade. Later, in 1844, he established the Palmyra Bank. He died at Palmyra (Cowles 1895, 18-20; T. Cook 1930, 63, 64, 80, 101, 269, 285).

12. Martin Butterfield (1790-1866) was born at Westmoreland, New Hampshire. He moved to Palmyra in 1828 and worked in the hardware business, becoming also a manufacturer of rope. In 1859 he was elected to the United States House of Representatives, serving one term as a Republican. He died at Palmyra (T. Cook 1930, 147, 180, 234, 291; *Who Was Who in America,* 1967, 157; *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress,* 1989, 720).

13. Stephen P. Seymour opened a hardware store in Palmyra with William H. Bowman in 1837. In 1870 he was chosen as vice-president of the First National Bank of Palmyra. He later moved from Palmyra (T. Cook 1930, 65, 73, 147, 285).

D. S. Jackways,[14]
John Hurlbut,[15]
H. Linnell,[16]
Jas. Jenner,[17]
S. Ackley,[18]
Josiah Rice,[19]
Jesse Townsend,[20]
Rich'd. D. Clark,[21]
Th. P. Baldwin,[22]
John Sothington,
Durfey Chase,[23]

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14. On David Strong Jackway(s) (1787-1854), see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, n. 223.

15. John Hurlbut was one of the early settlers and a major land holder in Palmyra. He was also an elder in the Presbyterian church (McIntosh 1877, 139; T. Cook 1930, 121). He is listed in the 1840 census of Palmyra, New York, in his forties (1840:214).

16. Perhaps Haskill Linnell (in his thirties) listed in the 1840 Palmyra, New York, census (1840:211). He was associated with Palmyra's Western Presbyterian Church in 1828 (see "Records of the Session of the Presbyterian Church in Palmyra," vol. 2, p. 16, Western Presbyterian Church, Palmyra, New York).

17. James Jenner (1807-53) ran a furniture factory and store in the James Jenner block on Palmyra's Main Street and was a leading member of Palmyra's Western Presbyterian Church. He was a stockholder in the Palmyra Hotel built in 1837 (T. Cook 1930, 38, 57, 63, 89, 249).

18. Stephen Ackley owned commercial property in downtown Palmyra (McIntosh 1877, 143; T. Cook 1930, 159). He is listed as a fire warden in the village minutes for 1828 (typescript, Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York). He is listed in the 1830 census of Palmyra, New York, in his forties (1830:42).

19. Josiah Rice was a deacon in the Free Congregational Church of Sodus, Wayne County, New York (McIntosh 1877, 173, 174). Perhaps the same Josiah Rice (in his thirties) listed in the 1840 Marion, Wayne County, New York, census (1840:195).

20. On Jesse Townsend (1766-1838), see introduction to III.I.6, JESSE TOWNSEND TO PHINEAS STILES, 24 DEC 1833.

21. Perhaps Richard Clark (in his seventies) listed in the 1840 Canandaigua, Ontario County, New York, census (1840:12).

22. On Thomas P. Baldwin (1790-1858), see III.A.2, BARTON STAFFORD STATEMENT, 3 NOV 1833, n. 6.

23. Durfee Chase (1793-1872) was a leading "homeopathic" physician in Palmyra. He was a Grand Master of Palmyra's Mount Moriah Masonic

Wells Anderson,[24]
N. H. Beckwith,[25]
Philo Durfee,[26]
Giles. S. Ely,[27]
R. W. Smith,[28]

Lodge in 1822 and 1823, and a High Priest in Palmyra's Eagle Chapter. He died in Palmyra (T. Cook 1930, 103, 159-60, 238; McIntosh 1877, 42, 142, 143, 144, 145; Reed 1902, 1:214).

24. Wells Anderson, born in East Haddam, Connecticut, established a boot and shoe store at the east end of Palmyra's Main Street about 1820. He married Dolly Beckwith, sister of Nathaniel and George Beckwith, in 1810. He was a town assessor in 1829 (McIntosh 1877, 142; T. Cook 1930, 91, 110; Palmyra Village Minutes, Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York). He is listed in the 1840 census of Palmyra, New York, as being in his fifties (1840:215).

25. Nathaniel H. Beckwith arrived at Palmyra about 1812 and opened a mercantile business with his younger brother, George. According to local historian Thomas Cook, "few of the early families to make a home or homes in this village were more closely connected with the commercial and social life here than that of the Beckwiths" (T. Cook 1930, 109, 119; McIntosh 1877, 141, 143). He was a senior warden in Palmyra's Mount Moriah Masonic Lodge ("Return of the Mt. Moriah Lodge No. 112," 1828-31, Chancellor Livingston Library and Museum, Grand Lodge of New York, New York, New York). He is listed in the 1830 census of Palmyra, New York, in his forties (1830:36).

26. Philo Durfee (1810-90), son of Pardon and Ruth Durfee, was born in Palmyra. He married Mary Warner White (1813-61) in Palmyra on 12 February 1833. He was a merchant and a "highly respected gentleman and extensively known." He appears in the village minutes as an assessor for the years 1834-35 (Palmyra Village Minutes, typescript, Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York). He moved to Buffalo, New York, sometime after 1835. He died at Cherry Hill, New Jersey (Reed 1902, 2:94).

27. Giles S. Ely was a businessman in Palmyra (McIntosh 1877, 142, 143). He was associated with Palmyra's Western Presbyterian Church in 1828 ("Records of the Session of the Presbyterian Church in Palmyra," vol. 2, p. 20, Western Presbyterian Church, Palmyra, New York). He is listed in the 1830 census of Palmyra, New York, in his thirties (1830:42).

28. Robert W. Smith moved to Palmyra as a young man and at one time worked as a foreman in the Jessup shoe factory on Main Street. He was a member of Palmyra's Western Presbyterian Church (McIntosh 1877, 145; T. Cook 1930, 102, 249; III.L.20, PALMYRA [NY] PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH RECORDS, MAR 1830). He was also a grand master of Palmyra's Mount Moriah Masonic Lodge ("Return of Mt. Moriah Lodge

Pelatiah West,[29]
Henry Jessup,[30]
Linus North,[31]
Thos. Rogers, 2d.[32]
Wm. Parke,[33]
Josiah Francis,[34]
Amos Hollister,
G. A. Hathaway,
David G. Ely,[35]

No. 112," 1828-31, Chancellor Livingston Library and Museum, Grand Lodge of New York, New York, New York). He is listed in the 1840 census of Palmyra, New York, in his thirties (1840:211).

29. Pelatiah West ran a saddle and harness shop and was an elder in Palmyra's Presbyterian church (T. Cook 1930, 65; III.L.20, PALMYRA [NY] PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH RECORDS, MAR 1830). He is listed in the 1830 census of Palmyra, New York, in his thirties (1830:36).

30. On Henry Jessup, see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, n. 106.

31. Linus North was a Presbyterian minister (McIntosh 1877, 170). He is listed in the 1830 census of Palmyra, New York, in his thirties (1830:36).

32. Thomas Rogers II was one of the three founders of the Palmyra Manufacturing Company in 1827 (T. Cook 1930, 49; see also Thomas and Harriet Rogers, Indenture, 1 April 1836, Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York). He is listed in the 1840 census of Palmyra, New York, in his fifties (1840:211).

33. William Parke was a deacon in the First Baptist Church of Palmyra (McIntosh 1877, 143, 148; T. Cook 1930, 250). He is listed as a trustee in the village minutes for 1828 (typescript, Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra New York). He is listed in the 1840 census of Palmyra, New York, in his sixties (1840:217).

34. Josiah Francis is listed as overseer of road district three in the Palmyra Village minutes for 1829 (typescript, Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York).

35. David G. Ely (1803-45), in his thirties, is listed in the 1840 Palmyra, New York, census (1840:215).

H. K. Jerome,[36]
G. Beckwith,[37]
Lewis Foster,[38]
Hiram Payne,[39]
P. Grandin,[40]
L. Hurd,[41]
Joel Thayer,[42]

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36. Hiram K. Jerome (1798-79) began practicing law in Palmyra in 1824, later serving as judge of Wayne County Court, 1839-42. He also ran a grain and pork business. Beginning in the 1830s, his business was located in a large warehouse along the canal. In 1836 he became a stockholder in the Palmyra Hotel, which was completed in 1837. In 1828 he was chosen as a vestryman of Palmyra's Zion Episcopal Church (McIntosh 1877, 38, 43, 143, 154; T. Cook 1930, 36, 89, 253; Jerome Family File, Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York).

37. George Beckwith (1790-1867) arrived at Palmyra about 1812. He became "a successful merchant in Palmyra for fifty-five years." His business ventures included a carpet store and a mercantile business with his older brother. He was a stockholder in the Palmyra Hotel, which was completed in 1837, and at one time served as president of the Wayne County Bank in Palmyra. He was also a leading elder in Palmyra's Presbyterian church, and was sent with others to investigate the Smiths' absence from that church (McIntosh 1877, 141, 143, 154; T. Cook 1930, 89, 95, 109, 110, 285; III.L.20, PALMYRA [NY] PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH RECORDS, MAR 1830).

38. Lewis Foster (1800-48), in his thirties, is listed in the 1840 Palmyra, New York, census (1840:224).

39. Hiram Payne was a member of Palmyra's Humanity Lodge (McIntosh 1877, 106). He is listed in the 1840 census of Palmyra, New York, in his seventies (1840:211).

40. Philip Grandin (1792-?) was a county collector (McIntosh 1877, 141; T. Cook 1930, 19). He is listed in the 1830 census of Palmyra, New York, in his thirties (1830:38).

41. Lovell (or Lovewell) Hurd was landlord and keeper of Palmyra's Eagle Hotel (McIntosh 1877, 141). He married Sally Smith in 1825 (*Wayne Sentinel,* 12 January 1825), and served as secretary of Palmyra's Mount Moriah Masonic Lodge ("Return of Mt. Moriah Lodge No. 112," 1828-31, Chancellor Livingston Library and Museum, Grand Lodge of New York, New York, New York).

42. Joel Thayer (or Thayre) (1787-?) was in the ashery and pork-packing business with his twin brother Levi. Together they owned several buildings along the canal and several freight boats (T. Cook 1930, 36, 76). He is listed in the 1830 census of Palmyra, New York, in his forties (1830:41). See

E. D. Robinson,
Asahel Millard,[43]
A. Ensworth,[44]
Isarel F. Chilson,[45]

note 9 above.

43. Asahel Millard was a builder known for his work on the Western Presbyterian Church of Palmyra, the Palmyra Hotel, and the Union School (T. Cook 1930, 110, 249). He is listed in the 1830 census of Palmyra, New York, in his thirties (1830:36).

44. Azel Ensworth was a physician who moved to Palmyra in 1792 and opened a public house or tavern. He later moved to Rochester (McIntosh 1877, 141). In 1826 he returned to Palmyra to marry his second wife (*Wayne Sentinel,* 14 April 1826).

45. Israel (mispelled "Isarel") F. Chilson was taxed for 100 acres on Manchester Lot 68 for 1833 (Manchester Assessment Records, Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York). He appears in 1830 census of Manchester, New York, in his twenties (1830:170).

12.
DAVID STAFFORD STATEMENT, 5 DECEMBER 1833

Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 249-50.

EDITORIAL NOTE

David Stafford, in his thirties, is listed in the 1830 Manchester, Ontario County, New York, census (1830:170). In 1833 he was taxed for twenty acres on Manchester Lot 3, the next lot south of the Smiths' farm on Stafford Road (Manchester Assessment Records, Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York).

Manchester, December 5th, 1833.

I have been acquainted with the family of Joseph Smith Sen. for several years, and I know him to be a drunkard and a liar, and to be much in the habit of gambling. He and his boys were truly a lazy set of fellows, and more particularly Joseph, who, very aptly followed his father's example, and in some respects was worse. When intoxicated he was very quarrelsome. Previous to his going to Pennsylvania to get married,[1] we worked together making a coal-pit. While at work at one time, a dispute arose between us, (he having drinked a little too freely) and some hard words passed between us, and as usual with him at such times, was for fighting. He got the advantage of me in the scuffle, and a gentleman by the name of Ford[2] interfered, when

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1. Previous to his marriage on 18 January 1827, Smith left Manchester about November 1826 to work for Joseph Knight in Colesville, New York (IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 2).

2. This person remains unidentified. Perhaps the same Ford mentioned during George Edward Anderson's 1907 interview with a Mr. Purdy in Manchester, New York. Anderson recorded in his diary: "Talk[ed] with Mr. Purdy, a Quaker. Said Joseph Smith did not have a good reputation among his neighbors. 'Mr. Ford had told him he was acquainted with Joe Smith as a boy, and he was 'vile and profane' etc. Did not see how any good could come from such a man'" (Diary, 169, Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum, Salt Lake City, Utah, cited in Holzapfel, Cottle, Stoddard 1995, 167).

Joseph turned to fighting him. We both entered a complaint against him and he was fined for the breach of the Peace.[3] It is well known, that the general employment of the Smith family was money digging and fortune-telling. They kept around them constantly, a gang of worthless fellows who dug for money nights, and were idle in the day time.[4] It was a mystery to their neighbors how they got their living. I will mention some circumstances and the public may judge for themselves. At different times I have seen them come from the woods early in the morning, bringing meat which looked like mutton. I went into the woods one morning very early, shooting pa[r]tridges and found Joseph Smith Sen.[5] in company with two other [p. 249] men, with hoes, shovels and meat that looked like mutton. On seeing me they run like wild men to get out of sight.—Seeing the old man a few day[s] afterwards, I asked him why he run so the other day in the woods, ah, said he, you know that circumstances alter cases; it will not do to be seen at all time[s].

I can also state, that Oliver Cowdrey[6] proved himself to be a worthless person and not to be trusted or believed when he taught school in this neighborhood. After his [Cowdery] going into the ministry, while officiating in performing the ordinance of baptism in a brook, William Smith,[7] (brother

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3. Since extant justice of the peace records for Manchester cover only the years 1827-30, Stafford's claim of an 1826 litigation cannot be verified. Joseph Smith evidently commented on Stafford's account in 1842: "Joseph related an anecdote. while young his father had a fine large watch dog which bit off an ear from David Staffords hog, which Stafford had turned into ~~the~~ <Smith> corn field. Stafford <shot the dog &> with six other fellows pitched upon him [Joseph Smith] unawares to Joseph whipped the whole of them, & escaped unhurt <which they swore to as recorded in Hurlburt's or Howe's Book>" (I.A.22, JOSEPH SMITH JOURNAL EXCERPTS, 1 JAN, 9 JAN & 1 FEB 1843, under 1 January 1843). While Smith intended to describe the same event, differences between his account and that of Stafford's suggest the possibility that Smith reported a separate event (R. I. Anderson 1990, 36-37).

4. Martin Harris also described this company of money diggers (III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 164, 167).

5. On Joseph Smith, Sr. (1771-1840), see "Introduction to Joseph Smith, Sr., Collection."

6. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

7. On William Smith (1811-93), see "Introduction to William Smith Collection."

of Joseph Smith) seeing a young man writing down what was said on a piece of board, was quite offended and attempted to take it from him, kicked at him and clinched for a scuffle.—Such was the conduct of these pretended Disciples of the Lord.

DAVID STAFFORD.

On the 12th day of December, 1833, the said David Stafford appeared before me, and made oath that the foregoing statement, by him subscribed, is true.

FRED'K. SMITH,[8]
Justice of the Peace of Wayne Co. N.Y.

8. Frederick Smith was a justice of the peace for Wayne County, New York, from 1817 to 1849 (McIntosh 1877, 140).

13.
WILLIAM STAFFORD STATEMENT, 8 DECEMBER 1833

Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 237-40.

EDITORIAL NOTE

William Stafford (c. 1786-1863), after whom Palmyra's Stafford Street was named, was one of the first settlers in that town. Later he moved farther south on Stafford Road, locating in Manchester on a farm about a mile south of what subsequently became the Smiths' land. Pomeroy Tucker described him as "a respectable farmer in comfortable circumstances" (Tucker 1867, 24). He is listed in the 1860 census of Manchester with his wife Mary (b. c. 1788) (1860:469). Despite his negative appraisal of Joseph Smith's operations, Stafford evidently shared an interest in treasure seeking. Stafford's son John said that his father owned a peep stone (III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 13). It was perhaps in this context that Tucker explained that Stafford was "for many years a sailor, and was largely prone to the vagaries and superstitions peculiar to his class" (Tucker 1867, 24).[1] Stafford died at Manchester on 9 January 1863 (T. Cook 1930, 217, 221).

Manchester, Ontario Co. N.Y. Dec. 8th, 1833.

I, William Stafford, having been called upon to give a true statement of my knowledge, concerning the character and conduct of the family of Smiths, known to the world as the founders of the Mormon sect, do say, that

1. Tucker's description of Stafford has caused some to assert that Stafford was "a former sailor without education" and therefore did not write his own affidavit but merely signed one that Hurlbut had authored (e.g., R. L. Anderson 1970, 293). However, Tucker said nothing about Stafford's education, only that he was superstitious (R. I. Anderson 1990, 48). Even if Stafford was illiterate, he could have dictated his statement to Hurlbut. Regardless, as Rodger Anderson observes, "[w]hen he [Stafford] appeared before Judge Baldwin 'and made oath to the truth of the above statement, and signed the same,' he legally and morally became responsible for its contents" (1990, 48).

I first became acquainted with Joseph, Sen., and his family in the year 1820.[2] They lived, at that time, in Palmyra, about one mile and a half from my residence. A great part of their time was devoted to digging for money: especially in the night time, when they said the money could be most easily obtained. I have heard them tell marvellous tales, respecting the discoveries they had made in their peculiar occupation of money digging. They would say, for instance, that in such a place, in such a hill, on a certain man's farm, there were deposited keys, barrels and logsheads of coined silver and gold—bars of gold, golden images, brass kettles filled with gold and silver—gold candlesticks, swords, &c. &c. They would say, also, that nearly all the hills in this part of New York, were thrown up by human hands, and in them were large caves, which Joseph, Jr., could see, by placing a stone of singular appearance in his hat, in such a manner as to exclude all light; at which time pre[p. 237]tended he could see all things within and under the earth,—that he could see within the above mentioned caves, large gold bars and silver plates—that he could also discover the spirits in whose charge these treasures were, clothed in ancient dress. At certain times, these treasures could be obtained very easily; at others, the obtaining of them was difficult. The facility of approaching them, depended in a great measure on the state of the moon. New moon and good Friday, I believe, were regarded as the most favorable times for obtaining these treasures.[3] These tales I regarded as visionary. However, being prompted by curiosity, I at length accepted of their invitations, to join them in their nocturnal excursions. I will now relate a few incidents attending these excursions.

Joseph Smith, Sen.,[4] came to me one night, and told me, that Joseph Jr. had been looking in his glass, and had seen, not many rods from his house, two or three kegs of gold and silver, some feet under the surface of the earth: and that none others but the elder Joseph and myself could get them. I accordingly consented to go, and early in the evening repaired to the place of deposit. Joseph, Sen. first made a circle, twelve or fourteen feet in diameter. This circle, said he, contains the treasure. He then stuck in the ground a row of witch hazel sticks, around the said circle, for the purpose of keeping off

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2. Probably when the Smiths moved into the Jennings cabin located near the Palmyra/Manchester township line (see III.L.2, PALMYRA [NY] HIGHWAY SURVEY, 13 JUN 1820).

3. Regarding the folk magic aspects of this description, see Quinn 1987, 120-21.

4. On Joseph Smith, Sr. (1771-1840), see "Introduction to Joseph Smith, Sr., Collection."

the evil spirits. Within this circle he made another, of about eight or ten feet in diameter. He walked around three times on the periphery of this last circle, muttering to himself something which I could not understand. He next stuck a steel rod in the centre of the circles, and then enjoined profound silence upon us, lest we should arouse the evil spirit who had the charge of these treasures. After we had dug a trench about five feet in depth around the rod, the old man by signs and motions, asked leave of absence, and went to the house to inquire of [p. 238] young Joseph the cause of our disappointment. He soon returned and said, that Joseph had remained all this time in the house, looking in his stone and watching the motions of the evil spirit—that he saw the spirit come up to the ring and as soon as it beheld the cone which we had formed around the rod, it caused the money to sink. We then went into the house, and the old man observed, that we had made a mistake in the commencem[e]nt of the operation; if it had not been for that, said he, we should have got the money.[5]

At another time,[6] they devised a scheme, by which they might satiate their hunger, with the mutton of one of my sheep. They had seen in my flock of sheep, a large, fat, black weather. Old Joseph and one of the boys came to me one day, and said that Joseph Jr. had discovered some very remarkable and valuable treasures, which could be procured only in one way. That way, was as follows:—That a black sheep should be taken on to the ground where the treasures were concealed—that after cutting its throat, it should be led around a circle while bleeding. This being done, the wrath of the evil spirit would be appeased: the treasures could then be obtained, and my share of them was to be four fold. To gratify my curiosity, I let them have a large fat sheep. They afterwards informed me, that the sheep was killed pursuant to commandment; but as there was some mistake in the process, it did not have desired effect. This, I believe, is the only time they ever made money-digging a profitable business. They, however, had around them constantly a worthless gang, whose employment it was to dig money nights, and who, day times, had more to do

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5. Stafford's description minutely follows well-known occult magic practice (see Quinn 1987, 23, 54, 56, 82).

6. Evidently the following account of the sheep sacrifice occurred before Smith received the plates in September 1827. Late Palmyra legend dates the event prior to digging of the cave on "Miner's Hill," which Lorenzo Saunders believed occurred before his father's death in October 1825 (see III.J.35, THOMAS L. COOK HISTORY, 1930, 226; III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 8-9).

with mutton than money.[7]

When they found that the people of this vicinity would no longer put any faith in their schemes for digging money, they then pretended to find a gold bible, of which, they said, the book of Mormon was only an introduction. This [p. 239] latter book was at length fitted for the press. No means were taken by any individual to suppress its publication: No one apprehended any danger from a book, originating with individuals who had neither influence, honesty or honor.[8] The two Josephs and Hiram,[9] promised to show me the plates, after the book of Mormon was translated. But, afterwards, they pretended to have received an express commandment, forbidding them to show the plates. Respecting the manner of receiving and translating the book of Mormon, their statements were always discordant. The elder Joseph would say that he had seen the plates, and that he knew them to be gold; at other times he would say that they looked like gold; and other times he would say he had not seen the plates at all. I have thus briefly stated a few of the facts, in relation to the conduct and character of this family of Smiths; probably sufficient

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7. Stafford told the sheep story both before and after Hurlbut took his affidavit (see III.J.15, STEPHEN S. HARDING TO THOMAS GREGG, FEB 1882, 56; III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 24-25; and III.D.4, CORNELIUS R. STAFFORD STATEMENT, [23] MAR 1885). See also III.J.22, PALMYRA RESIDENT ACCOUNT, 2 OCT 1888; and III.J.30, CHARLES W. BROWN ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1904. Pomeroy Tucker said that Stafford's sheep was sacrificed "upon a hill near his [Smith's] residence" (III.J.5, POMEROY TUCKER REMINISCENCE, 1858). Wallace Miner and Thomas L. Cook identified this hill as "Old Sharp," located on Chase family property on Manchester Lot 2 along the Canandaigua Road (see III.J.35, THOMAS L. COOK HISTORY, 1930, 222, 237-38). Anderson favors Wallace Miner's version because it "exonerates the Smiths of dishonesty, a reversal of Hurlbut reporting Stafford" (R. L. Anderson 1970, 294; see III.J.36, WALLACE MINER REMINISCENCE, 1930; see also III.J.37 WALLACE MINER REMINISCENCE, 1932). However, Stafford's 1833 first-hand account is to be favored over Miner's second-hand version remembered nearly two generations later (R. I. Anderson 1990, 50). Furthermore, Miner's report cannot be considered a reversal of Stafford's 1833 statement since Stafford did not accuse the Smiths of stealing the sheep, but that he "let them *have* a large fat sheep" (see ibid.).

8. Lucy Smith contradicts Stafford's claim (see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:113).

9. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

has been stated without my going into detail.

WILLIAM STAFFORD.

State of New York, Wayne County, ss:

I certify, that on this 9th day of December, 1833, personally appeared before me, William Stafford, to me known, and made oath to the truth of the above statement, and signed the same.

TH[OMAS]. P. BALDWIN,
Judge of Wa[y]ne County Court.[10]

10. Stafford's notarized statement is also accompanied by the testimonies of J. S. Colt, George Beckwith, Nathaniel H. Beckwith, Thomas Rogers II, and Martin W. Wilcox regarding Stafford's "truth and veracity" (see concluding portion of III.A.9, PETER INGERSOLL STATEMENT, 2 DEC 1833).

14.
WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DECEMBER 1833

Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 240-48.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Willard Chase (1798-1871), son of Clark Chase, was a carpenter and joiner by trade. He married Melissa Saunders (c. 1801-?), sister of Lorenzo and Benjamin Saunders. Lorenzo Saunders described Chase as "a true Wesleyan preacher," and Lucy Mack Smith said he was "a methodist class leader" (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 8, 9; I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:63). He is listed in the 1860 census of Palmyra as a "Meth[odist] Clergyman" (1860:791), and his obituary reported that he was "formerly a Minister of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and was an earnest and zealous worker for many years" (*Palmyra Courier,* 17 March 1871). Despite his Methodist affiliation, Chase like his neighbors the Smiths was an active treasure seeker. John Stafford said Willard's sister, Sally, would look into a stone to locate buried treasure and Willard would dig; Lorenzo Saunders said Chase told him that he and Alvin Smith dug for money together (I.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 16; III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 8-9). According to Lucy Smith, Chase and his sister were active with other treasure seekers in the area in searching for Joseph's gold plates in the fall of 1827 (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:63). In 1833 Chase owned thirty-six acres on Manchester Lot 1 (Manchester Assessment Records, 1833, Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York). He died at Palmyra on 10 March 1871 (see McIntosh 1877, 209; T. Cook 1930, 236; III.J.12, ABEL D. CHASE STATEMENT, 2 MAY 1879; Reed 1902, 1:214).

Manchester, Ontario Co. N.Y. 1833.[1]

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1. While the heading of Chase's statement gives only the year 1833, the date of 11 December for notarization indicates that it was composed on or before that date.

I became acquainted with the Smith family, known as the authors of the Mormon Bible, in the year 1820.[2] At that time, they were engaged in the money digging business, which they followed until the latter part of the season of 1827.[3] In the year 1822, I was engaged in digging a well. I employed Alvin[4] and Joseph Smith to assist me; the latter of whom is now known as the Mormon prophet. After digging about twenty feet below the surface of the [p. 240] earth, we discovered a singularly appearing stone, which excited my curiosity. I brought it to the top of the well, and as we were examining it, Joseph put it into his hat, and then his face into the top of his hat. It has been said by Smith, that *he* brought the stone from the well; but this is false.[5]

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2. Probably when the Smiths moved to the log cabin just north of the Palmyra/Manchester township line (see III.L.2, PALMYRA [NY] ROAD SURVEY, 14 JUN 1820).

3. Richard L. Anderson tries to discount Chase's portrayal of the Smiths as treasure seekers. He argues that since Chase claimed no first-hand knowledge, and considering that Chase was himself a money digger, "the conclusion follows that the Smiths did not have a connection with the money digging circles in the area" (R. L. Anderson 1970, 297). Because Chase concealed his own involvement in treasure seeking, he probably also obscured any personal knowledge of Smith-inspired digs. In a private conversation with Lorenzo Saunders, Chase confessed that he and Alvin Smith had dug for treasure together (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 8, 9). One excavation conducted by Joseph Jr. involving the sacrifice of William Stafford's sheep occurred practically at the Chase's front door and undoubtedly with their knowledge, if not direct involvement (see III.A.13, WILLIAM STAFFORD STATEMENT, 8 DEC 1833). Chase also had access to reliable sources such as his sister Sally, who told Mrs. S. F. Anderick that Joseph Smith sometimes asked her to consult her stone about the location of buried treasures (III.D.8, S. F. ANDERICK STATEMENT, 24 JUN 1887); Samuel Lawrence, whom Chase specifically names as his source for Smith's treasure hunting in Pennsylvania and for his account of Smith and Lawrence's visit to the Manchester hill; and his brothers-in-law Lorenzo and Benjamin Saunders, whose family lived on the land on which Joseph Sr. would dig a cave under Joseph Jr.'s direction (e.g., III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 8-9, 12). See also R. I. Anderson 1990, 45-46, 58-59.

4. On Alvin Smith (1798-1823), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 10.

5. See I.C.1, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., INTERVIEW WITH FAYETTE LAPHAM, 1830; and III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 163. Regarding the location of Chase's well, see III.J.35, THOMAS L. COOK HISTORY, 1930, 238.

There was no one in the well but myself. The next morning he came to me, and wished to obtain the stone, alledging that he could see in it; but I told him I did not wish to part with it on account of its being a curiosity, but would lend it.[6] After obtaining the stone, he began to publish abroad what wonders he could discover by looking in it, and made so much disturbance among the credulous part of [the] community, that I ordered the stone to be returned to me again. He had it in his possession about two years.—I believe, some time in 1825, Hiram Smith[7] (brother of Joseph Smith) came to me, and wished to borrow the same stone, alledging that they wanted to accomplish some business of importance, which could not very well be done without the aid of the stone. I told him it was of no particular worth to me, but merely wished to keep it as a curiosity, and if he would pledge me his word and honor, that I should have it when called for, he might take it; which he did and took the stone. I thought I could rely on his word at this time, as he had made a profession of religion.[8] But in this I was disappointed, for he disregarded both his word and honor.

In the fall of 1826, a friend called upon me and wished to see that stone, about which so much had been said; and I told him if he would go with me to Smith's, (a distance of about half a mile) he might see it. But to my surprize, on going to Smith's, and asking him for the stone, he said, "you cannot have it;" I told him it belonged to me, repeated to him the promise he made me at the time of obtaining the stone: upon which he faced me with a malignant [p. 241] look and said, "I don't care who in the Devil it belongs to, *you* shall not have it."

In the month of June, 1827, Joseph Smith, Sen., related to me the following story: "That some years ago, a spirit had appeared to Joseph his son, in a vision, and informed him that in a certain place there was a record on plates of gold, and that he was the person that must obtain them, and this he must do in the following manner: On the 22d of September [1823], he must repair to the place where was deposited this manuscript, dressed in black

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6. On Smith's borrowing the stone, see also III.J.12, ABEL D. CHASE STATEMENT, 2 MAY 1879, 231; and IV.D.10, WILLIAM R. HINE STATEMENT, CIRCA MAR 1885. Chase perhaps conceals his own belief in seer stones.

7. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

8. Perhaps Chase refers to Hyrum's joining the Presbyterian church, which evidently occurred sometime during the Palmyra revival of 1824-25 (see III.L.20, PALMYRA [NY] PRESBYTERIAN RECORDS, MAR 1830; see also Walters 1969a; M. Hill 1982; Marquardt and Walters 1994, 15-41).

clothes, and riding a black horse[9] with a switch tail, and demand the book in a certain name, and after obtaining it, he must go directly away, and neither lay it down nor look behind him. They accordingly fitted out Joseph with a suit of black clothes and borrowed a black horse.[10] He repaired to the place of deposit and demanded the book, which was in a stone box, unsealed, and so near the top of the ground that he could see one end of it, and raising it up, took out the book of gold; but fearing some one might discover where he got it, he laid it down to place back the top stone, as he found it; and turning round, to his surprise there was no book in sight. He again opened the box, and in it saw the book, and attempted to take it out, but was hindered. He saw in the box something like a toad,[11] which soon assumed the appearance of a man, and struck him on the side of his head.—Not being discouraged at trifles, he again stooped down and strove to take the book, when the spirit struck him again, and knocked him three or four rods, and hurt him prodigiously. After recovering from his fright, he enquired why he could not obtain the plates; to which the spirit made reply, because you have not obeyed your orders. He then enquired when he *could* have them, and was answered thus: come one year from this day, and bring with you your oldest brother, and you shall have them.[12] This spirit, he said [p. 242] was the spirit of the prophet who wrote this book, and who was sent to Joseph Smith, to make known these things to him. Before the expiration of the year, his oldest brother died; which the old man said was an *accidental providence!*

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9. The request for black clothes and horse is also related in III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 11 (see also Quinn 1987, 141-42).

10. Smith borrowed a horse and wagon from Joseph Knight (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:60; IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 2).

11. Compare III.B.13, BENJAMIN SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, CIRCA SEP 1884, 24; and III.J.24, ORSON SAUNDERS ACCOUNT, 1893. See also Quinn 1987, 124, 126-32; however, I see no justification for Quinn's associating the toad-like creature with a salamander (a lizard-like creature) invented by document forger Mark Hofmann. The toad was also associated with folk magic and treasure seeking (see, for example, Abner Cole's claim that "Walters the Magician" used a "*stuffed Toad*" in III.E.3, *PALMYRA REFLECTOR,* 1829-1831, under 12 June 1830, 37).

12. The instruction to bring Alvin is also repeated in III.C.1, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., INTERVIEW WITH FAYETTE LAPHAM, 1830, 306-7; III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 9-10; III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 16; and IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 1.

Joseph went one year from that day [1824], to demand the book, and the spirit enquired for his brother, and he said that he was dead. The spirit then commanded him to come again, in just one year [1825], and bring a man with him. On asking who might be the man, he was answered that he would know him when he saw him.

Joseph believed that one Samuel T. Lawrence was the man alluded to by the spirit,[13] and went with him to a singular looking hill, in Manchester, and shewed him where the treasure was. Lawrence asked him if he had ever discovered any thing with the plates of gold; he said no: he then asked him to look in his stone,[14] to see if there was any thing with them. He looked, and said there was nothing; he told him to look again, and see if there was not a large pair of specks with the plates; he looked and soon saw a pair of spectacles, the same with which Joseph says he translated the Book of Mormon. Lawrence told him it would not be prudent to let these plates be seen for about two years, as it would make a great disturbance in the neighborhood. Not long after this, Joseph altered his mind, and said L[awrence]. was not the right man, nor had he told him the right place.[15] About this time he went to

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13. The naming of Samuel Lawrence as Alvin's substitute is also related in III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 10. But other sources name Emma Hale: III.A.15, HENRY HARRIS STATEMENT, CIRCA 1833, 252; III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 16; III.F.1, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOHN A. CLARK, 1827 & 1828; IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 2.

14. According to Joseph Knight, Samuel Lawrence was "a Seear [Seer] and he had Bin to the hill and knew the things in the hill and was trying to obtain them" (IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 2).

15. Concerning the visit of Smith and Lawrence to the hill in 1825, D. Michael Quinn has noted: "From existing accounts, there may be an explanation for what seems to be an intentional omission of one visit to the hill as Joseph Knight and Joseph Smith referred to the events from 1823 to 1827. ... Although indicating that the visit with Lawrence occurred in 1825, Willard Chase did not indicate that the visit occurred on 22 September. Joseph Smith may have taken Lawrence to the hill to look for the plates prior to the required date in 1825, and Chase's account does indicate that Joseph Smith was not happy about the results of their activities on that occasion. This may be why Lorenzo Saunders reported of the visit on 22 September 1823 that Lawrence 'did not go,' even though Joseph Smith had previously chosen him [III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 10]. Both Chase and Saunders report that the effort to obtain the plates with Lawrence

Harmony in Pennsylvania,[16] and formed an acquaintance with a young lady, by the name of Emma Hale,[17] whom he wished to marry.—In the fall of 1826, he wanted to go to Pennsylvania to be married; but being destitute of means, he now set his wits to work, how he should raise money, and get recommendations, to procure the fair one of his choice. He went to Lawrence with the following story, as related to me by Lawrence himself. That he had discovered in Pennsylva[p. 243]nia, on the bank of the Susquehannah River, a very rich mine of silver, and if he would go there with him, he might have a share in the profits; that it was near high water mark and that they could load it into boats and take it down the river to Philadelphia, to market. Lawrence then asked Joseph if he was not deceiving him; no, said he, for I have been there and seen it with my own eyes, and if you do not find it so when we get there, I will bind myself to be your servant for three years. By these grave and fair promises Lawrence was induced to believe something in it, and agreed to go with him. L[awrence]. soon found that Joseph was out of money, and had to bear his expenses on the way. When they got to Pennsylvania, Joseph wanted L[awrence]. to recommend him to Miss H[ale]., which he did, although he was asked to do it; but could not well get rid of it as he was in his company. L[awrence]. then wished to see the silver mine, and he and Joseph went to the river, and made search, but found nothing. Thus, Lawrence had his trouble for his pains, and returned home lighter than he went, while Joseph had got his expenses borne, and a recommendation to his girl.[18]

Joseph's next move was to get married; the girl's parents being opposed to the match: as they happened to be from home, he took ad-

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was a failure. That failure may be directly indicated by the fact that none of these accounts of Smith's visit to the hill with Lawrence mention the angel. If the messenger did not appear on the hill in September 1825, the nonappearance of Moroni may be the reason for the omission of the one visit" (Quinn 1987, 138).

16. About November 1825.

17. On Emma Hale Smith (1804-79), see "Introduction to Emma Smith Collection."

18. Samuel Lawrence apparently told Lorenzo Saunders the same story (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 11; III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884, 5). W. R. Hine also mentioned Smith digging for Robert Kidd's treasure on the west bank of the Susquehanna River in Windsor, New York (IV.D.10, WILLIAM R. HINE STATEMENT, CIRCA MAR 1885).

vantage of the opportunity, and went off with her and was married.[19]

Now, being still destitute of money, he set his wits at work, how he should get back to Manchester, his place of residence; he hit upon the following plan, which succeeded very well. He went to an honest old Dutchman, by the name of Stowel,[20] and told him that he had discovered on the bank of Black River, in the village of Watertown, Jefferson County, N.Y. a cave, in which he had found a bar of gold, as big as his leg, and about three or four feet long.—That he could not get it out alone, on account of its being fast at one end; and if he would move him to Manchester, [p. 244] N.Y. they would go together, and take a chisel and mallet, and get it, and Stowel should share the prize with him. Stowel moved him.[21]

A short time after their arrival at Manchester, Stowel reminded Joseph of his promise; but he calmly replied, that he would not go, because his wife was now among strangers, and would be very lonesome if he went away. Mr. Stowel was then obliged to return without any gold, and with less money than he came.

In the fore part of September, (I believe,) 1827, the Prophet requested me to make him a chest, informing me that he designed to move back to Pennsylvania, and expecting soon to get his gold book, he wanted a chest to lock it up, giving me to understand at the same time, that if I would make the chest he would give me a share in the book. I told him my business was such that I could not make it: but if he would bring the book to me, I would lock it up for him. He said that would not do, as he was commanded to keep it two years, without letting it come to the eye of any one but himself.[22] This

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19. Joseph and Emma were married at South Bainbridge on 18 January 1827.

20. On Josiah Stowell (1770-184?), see introduction to IV.B.2, MARTHA CAMPBELL TO JOSEPH SMITH, 19 DEC 1843.

21. Since this event would have occurred in the Colesville/Bainbridge area, Chase would have had to rely on a distant source for which there is no corroborative evidence. According to Joseph Knight, Josiah Stowell did help Joseph and Emma move to Manchester in January 1827 (IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 2). Dale Morgan believed that either Smith or Chase was influenced by newspaper accounts of a "stupendous cavern" discovered near Watertown, New York, in the spring of 1822 (J. P. Walker 1986, 369-70, n. 19; *Palmyra Herald, and Canal Advertiser,* 19 June 1822; and *Niles Weekly Register,* 22 June 1822, 270-71).

22. Lucy Smith had recommended Chase to Joseph; however, this was after Smith got the plates on 22 September 1827 and before he brought them home several days later (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:62). Perhaps unaware of the time lapse between Joseph's removing the plates from

commandment, however, he did not keep, for in less than two years, twelve men said they had seen it.[23] I told him to get it and convince me of its existence, and I would make him a chest; but he said, that would not do, as he must have a chest to lock the book in, as soon as he took it out of the ground. I saw him a few days after, when he told me that I must make the chest. I told him plainly that I could not, upon which he told me that I could have no share in the book.

A few weeks after this conversation, he came to my house, and related the following story: That on the 22d of September, he arose early in the morning, and took a one horse wagon, of some one[24] that had stayed over night at their house, without leave or license; and, together with his wife, repaired to the hill which contained the book. He left his [p. 245] wife in the wagon, by the road, and went alone to the hill, a distance of thirty or forty rods from the road; he said he then took the book out of the ground and hid it in a tree top, and returned home. He then went to the town of Macedon to work. After about ten days,[25] it having been suggested that some one had got his book, his wife went after him; he hired a horse, and went home in the afternoon, staid long enough to drink one cup of tea, and then went for his book, found it safe, took off his frock, wrapt it round it, put it under his arm and ran all the way home, a distance of about two miles. He said he should think it would weigh sixty pounds, and was sure it would weigh forty. On his return home, he said he was attacked by two men in the woods, and knocked them both down and made his escape, arrived safe and secured his treasure.[26]—He then observed that if it had not been for that stone, (which he acknowledged belonged to

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the hill and his bringing them home, Chase may have later assumed Joseph had approached him before 22 September 1827.

23. In late June 1829 the three and eight witnesses plus Joseph Smith said they saw the plates (see VI.G.1, TESTIMONY OF THREE WITNESSES, JUN 1829; and III.L.13, TESTIMONY OF EIGHT WITNESSES, JUN 1829).

24. This was Joseph Knight (see n. 10 above).

25. Lucy Smith mentions the trip to Macedon, but seems to imply a much shorter length of stay (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:62).

26. Similar accounts have been given in I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:63-66; III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 166-67; and I.E.3, HERBERT S. SALISBURY REMINISCENCES, 1945 & 1954.

me,) he would not have obtained the book.[27] A few days afterwards, he told one of my neighbors that he had not got any such book, nor never had such an one; but that he had told the story to deceive the d—d fool, (meaning me,) to get him to make a chest. His neighbors having become disgusted with his foolish stories, he determined to go back to Pennsylvania, to avoid what he called persecution. His wits were now put to the task to contrive how he should get money to bear his expenses. He met one day in the streets of Palmyra, a rich man, whose name was Martin Harris, and addressed him thus; "I have a commandment from God to ask the first man I meet in the street to give me fifty dollars, to assist me in doing the work of the Lord by translating the Golden Bible." Martin being naturally a credulous man, hands Joseph the money.[28] In the Spring 1829,[29] Harris went to Pennsylvania, and on his return to Palmyra, reported that the Prophet's wife, in the month of [p. 246] June following would be delivered of a male child that would be able when two years old to translate the Gold Bible.[30] Then, said he, you will see Joseph Smith, Jr. walking through the streets of Palmyra, with a Gold Bible under his arm, and having a gold

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27. Both Mormon and non-Mormon sources state that Smith used his seer stone on his first visit to the hill to locate the gold plates (III.A.15, HENRY HARRIS STATEMENT, CIRCA 1833, 252; III.J.2, ORSAMUS TURNER ACCOUNT, 1851, 216; III.H.1, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1877; III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 376-77, 381).

28. The commandment from God is also mentioned in III.I.6, JESSE TOWNSEND TO PHINEAS STILES, 24 DEC 1833, 289. For Harris's giving financial assistance to Smith, see also I.A.7, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1832, 5; I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 9; and I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:73.

29. Actually spring 1828. Harris went to Harmony, Pennsylvania, and began to act as Smith's scribe on 12 April 1828. He returned to Palmyra in mid-June (see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 9).

30. Emma Smith gave birth to a male child on 15 June 1828, but he died the same day. The claim that the Smiths' unborn child would "translate the Gold Bible" is problematic since the translation had commenced before the birth. Regardless, similar statements were made by residents in Harmony, Pennsylvania. Sophia Lewis said she heard Smith say "the Book of Plates could not be opened under penalty of death by any other but his (Smith's) first-born, which was to be a male" (V.A.5, SOPHIA LEWIS STATEMENT, 1834). Joshua McKune similarly testified that he heard Smith state that his "first-born child was to translate the characters, and hieroglyphics, upon the Plates into our language at the age of three years" (V.B.1, JOSHUA

breast-plate on, and a gold sword by his side. This, however, by the by, proved false.

In April, 1830, I again asked Hiram for the stone which he had borrowed of me; he told me I should not have it, for Joseph made use of it in translating his Bible.[31] I reminded him of his promise, and that he had pledged his honor to return it; but he gave me the lie, saying the stone was not mine nor never was. Harris at the same time flew in a rage, took me by the collar and said I was a liar, and he could prove it by twelve witnesses. After I had extricated myself from him, Hiram, in a rage shook his fist at me, and abused me in a most scandalous manner.[32] Thus I might proceed in describing the character of these High Priests, by relating one transaction after another, which would all tend to set them in the same light in which they were regarded by their neighbors, viz: as a pest to society. I have regarded Joseph Smith Jr. from the time I first became acquainted with him until he left this part of the country, as a man whose word could not be depended upon.—Hiram's character was but very little better. What I have said respecting the characters of these men, will apply to the whole family. What I have stated relative to the characters of these individuals, thus far, is wholly true. After they became thorough Mormons, their conduct was more disgraceful than before. They did not hesitate to abuse any man, no matter how fair his character, provided he did not embrace their creed. Their tongues were continually employed in spreading scandal and abuse. Although they left this part of the country without paying their just [p. 247] debts,[33] yet their creditors were glad to have them do so, rather than to have them stay, disturbing the neighborhood.

Signed, WILLARD CHASE.

MCKUNE STATEMENT, 1834).

31. According to David Whitmer, Smith had given the stone to Oliver Cowdery in the spring of 1830 before the organization of the church on 6 April (see VI.A.33, DAVID WHITMER, *ADDRESS,* 1887, 32).

32. During the same month Chase said he had this altercation with Hyrum Smith and Martin Harris, April 1830, Abner Cole published an unsigned note to Hyrum that seemed to allude to such an event: "Please advise hyrum smith, and some of his ill-bred associates, not to be quite so impertinent, when *decent* folks denounce the imposition of the 'Gold-Bible[.]' the anaththemas [anathemas] of such ignorant wretches, although not feared, are not quite so well relished by some people—Apostles should keep cool" (III.E.3, *PALMYRA REFLECTOR,* 1829-1831, under 19 April 1830).

33. See discussion in III.A.1, MANCHESTER RESIDENTS GROUP STATEMENT, 3 NOV 1833, n. 3.

On the 11th December, 1833, the said Willard Chase appeared before me, and made oath that the foregoing statement to which he has subscribed his name, is true, according to his best recollection and belief.

FRED'K. SMITH,
Justice of the Peace of Wayne County.[34]

34. Chase's notarized statement is also accompanied by the testimonies of George Beckwith, Nathaniel H. Beckwith, Thomas Rogers II, and Martin W. Wilcox regarding his "truth and veracity" (see concluding portion of III.A.9, PETER INGERSOLL STATEMENT, 2 DEC 1833).

15.
HENRY HARRIS STATEMENT, CIRCA 1833

Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 251-52.

EDITORIAL NOTE

It is unknown if this Henry Harris is related to Martin Harris. He is perhaps the Henry Harris who appears in the 1820 census of Gorham, Ontario County, New York, between sixteen and twenty-six years of age (1820:228), as well as the Henry Harris appearing in the docket book of Manchester justice of the peace Nathan Pierce under the date 23 January 1830 (Nathan Pierce, Docket Book, 33, Manchester Township Office, Clifton Springs, New York). He apparently moved from New York in 1830 and may be the same man (in his thirties) listed in the 1830 census of Madison, Geauga County, Ohio (1830:194). He was still living in Madison (now in Lake County) for the 1850 federal census, where he is listed as being fifty years of age (1850:114).

This statement is anomalous with other Hurlbut documents dealing with the Smith family in New York in that it is neither signed nor dated, and is notarized in Ohio rather than in New York. Indeed, it is highly unusual for a notarized affidavit to be both unsigned and undated. Harris's statement was probably taken either before or just following Hurlbut's visit to the Palmyra/Manchester area, assuming it is one of Hurlbut's affidavits.

I, Henry Harris, do state that I became acquainted with the family of Joseph Smith, Sen. about the year 1820, in the town of Manchester, N[ew]. York.[1] They were a family that labored very little—the chief they did, was to dig for money. Joseph Smith, Jr. the pretended Prophet, used to pretend to tell fortunes; he had a stone which he used to put in his hat, by means of which he professed to tell people's fortunes.

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1. Probably when the Smiths moved to the Jennings cabin just north of the Palmyra/Manchester township line (see III.L.2, PALMYRA [NY] HIGHWAY SURVEY, 13 JUN 1820).

Joseph Smith, Jr. Martin Harris[2] and others, used to meet together in private, a while before the gold plates were found, and were familiarly known by the name of the "Gold Bible Company."[3] They were regarded by the community in which they lived, as a lying and indolent set of men and no confidence could be placed in them.

The character of Joseph Smith, Jr. for truth and veracity was such, that I would not believe him under oath. I was [p. 251] once on a jury before a Justice's Court and the Jury could not, and did not, believe his testimony to be true.[4] After he pretended to have found the gold plates, I had a conversation with him, and asked him where he found them and how he come to know where they were. He said he had a revelation from God that told him they were hid in a certain hill and he looked in his stone and saw them in the place of deposit; that an angel appeared, and told him he could not get the plates until he was married, and that when he saw the woman that was to be his wife, he should know her, and she would know him. He then went to Pennsylvania, got his wife, and they both went together and got the gold plates—he said it was revealed to him, that no one must see the plates but himself and wife.[5]

I then asked him what letters were engraved on them, he said italic letters written in an unknown language, and that he had copied some of the words and sent them to Dr. Mitchell and Professor Anthon of New York.[6] By looking on the plates he said he could not understand the words, but it was made known to him that he was the person that must translate them, and on looking through the stone was enabled to translate.[7]

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2. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

3. This term also appears in I.A.4, JOSEPH SMITH INTERVIEW WITH PETER BAUDER, OCT 1830, 36; and I.A.1, JOSEPH SMITH TO OLIVER COWDERY, 22 OCT 1829.

4. It is possible for Joseph Smith to have been called as a court witness, but this cannot be verified at present.

5. Emma Smith never saw the plates. However, compare Henry Harris's account with IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 1.

6. In February 1828 Martin Harris took a transcription of some Book of Mormon characters to Samuel L. Mitchell and Charles Anthon of Columbia University in New York City (e.g., I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 9).

7. Henry Harris's conversation with Smith evidently occurred sometime after Martin Harris's trip to New York City in February 1828 and before the Book of Mormon's publication in March 1830. It possibly occurred

After the Book was published, I frequently bantered him for a copy. He asked fourteen shillings a piece for them; I told him I would not give so much; he told me [he] had had a revelation that they must be sold at that price.[8]

Sometime afterwards I talked with Martin Harris about buying one of the Books and he told me they had had a new revelation, that they might be sold at ten shillings a piece.

[Henry Harris]

State of Ohio, Cuyahoga County, ss:

Personally appeared before me, Henry Harris, and made oath in due form of law, that the foregoing statements subscribed by him are true.

JONATHAN LAPHAM,[9]
Justice of the Peace.

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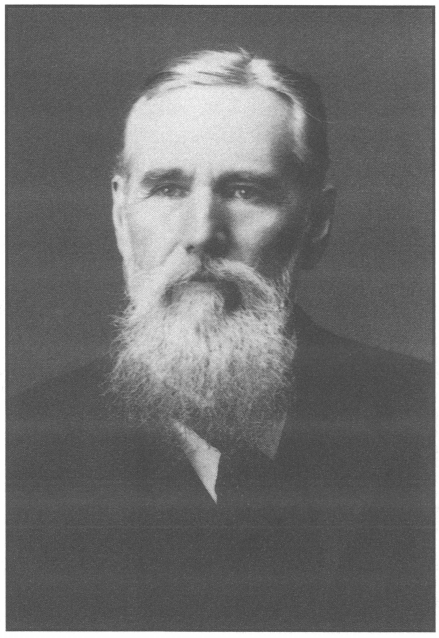
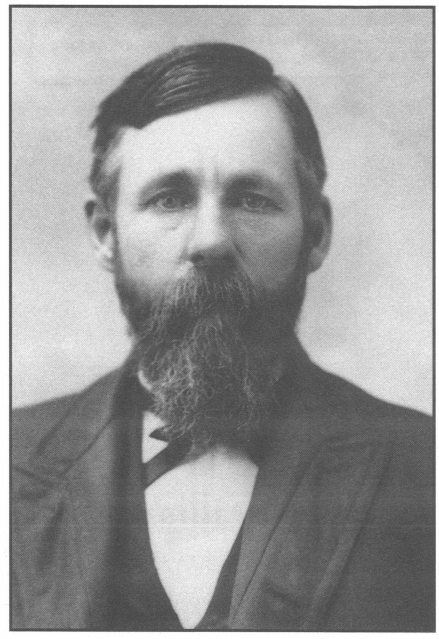
during Smith's visits to Palmyra/Manchester in early June and late June to late September 1829 in preparation for printing the Book of Mormon.

8. On 29 March 1830, while visiting the Whitmer family in Fayette, New York, David Marks was told that the Book of Mormon's price had been set by an angel (VI.F.1, DAVID MARKS ACCOUNT, 1831, 341). Other sources mention the reduction of the revealed price (see III.F.1, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH JOHN A. CLARK, 1827 & 1828; and III.D.2, SYLVIA WALKER STATEMENT, 20 MAR 1885). In a letter to Martin Harris, dated 22 February 1831, Joseph Smith directed him: "You will not sell the books for less than 10 Shillings" (LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah).

9. Jonathan Lapham is listed in the 1830 census of Chagrin, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, as being in his forties (1830:99).

B.
William H. and Edmund L. Kelley
COLLECTION





William H. Kelley (left), date and photographer unknown, and Edmund L. Kelley (right), date and photographer unknown. Courtesy Library-Archives, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, The Auditorium, Independence, Missouri.

INTRODUCTION TO WILLIAM H. AND EDMUND L. KELLEY COLLECTION

William H. Kelley (1841-1915) was born in Johnson County, Illinois. He served in the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS) as a member of the quorum of seventy from 1860 to 1873, then as an apostle until 1913. He married Ellen N. Campbell about 1865. He died at Lamoni, Iowa (Knisley 1948, s.v.).

Edmund L. Kelley (1844-1930), William's younger brother, was born at Vienna, Illinois. He married Catharine Bishop in 1876. In 1882 he became a counselor to George A. Blakeslee, presiding bishop in the RLDS church, a position he held until Blakeslee's death in 1890, whereupon Kelley became presiding bishop. In 1897 he was appointed a counselor to Joseph Smith III in the RLDS First Presidency, serving until 1902. He died at Independence, Missouri (Knisley 1948, s.v.).

William H. Kelley was engaged in his missionary labors in Michigan in July 1881 when a local newspaper printed an article by the Reverend C. C. Thorne of Canandaigua, New York, which contained disparaging statements about Joseph Smith by former neighbors Orin Reed, Danford Booth, and William Bryant (see III.C.1, *CADILLAC* [MI] *WEEKLY NEWS,* 6 APR 1880; also III.C.6, *ONTARIO COUNTY* [NY] *TIMES,* 27 JUL 1881). Believing these statements were "a trumped up thing," Kelley decided to visit the Palmyra/Manchester area and interview the three parties for himself "and ascertain whether this pious Rev. told the truth about what they said or not" (W. Kelley 1881, 162).

Joined by his brother Edmund, William Kelley arrived in the Palmyra/Manchester area in early March 1881. The published account of the Kelley interviews indicates that they were conducted on 5 March 1881 (ibid., 161), but a note on the back of page 2 of their notebook seems to indicate that the interviews took place on 6 March ("1881 made these visits March 6"). In addition to interviewing Reed, Booth, and Bryant, the Kelleys interviewed seven others: Ezra Pierce, Orlando Saunders, Abel Chase, John H. Gilbert, Hiram Jackway, John Stafford, and Thomas H. Taylor. According to William Bryant, both Kelleys asked questions, while one took notes. Despite William Kelley's claim that the interviews were published "just as they occurred," and E. L. Kelley's statement that the language of those interviewed "was taken down at the time" in their "own words" (ibid., 168;

and Braden and Kelley 1884, 122), the Kelleys were actually poor note-takers. An examination of their small notebook at the RLDS Church Library-Archives in Independence, Missouri, reveals that the interviews were written in pencil in a terse, fragmentary fashion.

Perhaps a month or two months later, William Kelley fleshed out the interview notes to produce what probably sounded like actual transcripts and then published them in the 1 June 1881 issue of the RLDS church's *Saints' Herald*. After publication, the Kelleys apparently sent copies of the article to "all the families or parties whom they had interviewed" (III.C.6, *ONTARIO COUNTY* [NY] *TIMES,* 27 JUL 1881). Some of those interviewed by the Kelleys apparently did not like what they read, because the Reverend Thorne was immediately collecting affidavits in which Danford Booth, Orin Reed, and John H. Gilbert complained that they had been misrepresented. These affidavits and Thorne's response were published in the *Ontario County Times* on 27 July 1881 (see III.C.2, ORIN AND AMANDA REED AFFIDAVITS, 29 JUN 1881; III.C.4, DANFORD BOOTH AFFIDAVIT, 1 JUL 1881; and III.C.5, JOHN H. GILBERT AFFIDAVIT, 12 JUL 1881). Comparison of the notes with Kelley's published version, together with subsequent denials, justifies Rodger I. Anderson's conclusion that in preparing the interviews for publication "Kelley sometimes depended upon imagination as well as memory" (R. I. Anderson 1990, 76).

In 1884 the Kelleys visited Hillsdale County, Michigan, and conducted several interviews with Lorenzo and Benjamin Saunders. Unlike the earlier interviews, these 1884 interviews were more carefully taken down and sometimes signed. Perhaps because these interviews claimed a pre-1830 visit of Sidney Rigdon to the Smith residence in Manchester, they were never published. Reproduced in the collection that follows are the Kelley notes, the published 1881 interviews, and the 1884 interviews of Lorenzo and Benjamin Saunders.[1]

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1. The Kelleys may have also conducted interviews in Geauga County, Ohio, for which there are no extant notes. W. R. Hine, for instance, said he was interviewed by the Kelleys and that notes were kept (IV.D.10, WILLIAM R. HINE STATEMENT, CIRCA MAR 1885). But the Kelleys never published this interview and their notes are not among the Kelleys' papers in the RLDS Church Library-Archives.

1.
KELLEY NOTES, 6 MARCH 1881

William Kelley, Notebook, No. 5, 1-16, William H. Kelley Papers, RLDS Church Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri.

EDITORIAL NOTE

On 6 March 1881 William H. and Edmund L. Kelley visited Palmyra and Manchester, New York, and interviewed Thomas H. Taylor, William and Mary Bryant, Danford Booth, Ezra Pierce, Orin Reed, Orlando Saunders, Abel Chase, John H. Gilbert, and Hiram Jackway. They also interviewed John Stafford in Rochester. Notes of these interviews were written in pencil in a small notebook, apparently in the handwriting of William Kelley. Pagination has been added for convenience.

Dr. [John] Stafford [of] Rochester near Genisee Canall Mon=ger Street— Knows of the Latter day Saints[1]

Anthony Pratt in Manchester knows of them[2]

Thomas H. Taylor. we met in Manches[ter]. Was with John Brown. Says Smith [was] ducked in the creek in Manchester[.] They did nothing[.] Says nothing has been sustained [a]gainst Smith[3] [p. 1]

Mary Bryant <Born> 1806[.] Says Cowdr[y]s "were low shacks." Cowdr[y]s did not [join?] Baptist Church or Methodist. Wm B<rr>unite b[o]rn 1795. Says Smith was a drun[k]ard, but never saw him drunk. Says he remembers seeing Smith, but says he never saw him drunk. He knew nothing of the fam[i]ly on what was based on rumor. All he was acquainted with of the Smiths was [18]25 or [18]30[.] Mrs. Robinson of Jackson[,] Mich lives with Mr. Withy. She lived at Mormon Hill.[4] [p. 2]

Made these visits March 6 <1881> [p. 2, back]

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1. See pages 13-16 below for notes of the Kelleys' interview with John Stafford.

2. Pratt evidently was not interviewed by the Kelleys.

3. Compare III.B.10, THOMAS H. TAYLOR INTERVIEW, 1881.

4. Compare III.B.2, WILLIAM BRYANT INTERVIEW, 1881.

D[anford]. Booth Says O[liver] Cowdry was a low bettifog=ging law[y]er & Mason. guess he was no church member and Mason. Was Cowdry a drunkard[?] Every body drank then. Cowdry [was] known as "loos[e] Cowdry"—[5]

[*several lines blank*]

Orin ~~Smith~~ <Reed>[6]

Ezry Pierce lives in the Smith Neighborhood[7] [p. 3]

Orland[o] Saunders lives on the Road leading from Palmyra to Manches[ter].[8]

Walace Minor[9]

Dorius Peirce lives in Chesea[,] Mich.[10]

Able Chase on Palmyra and Manchester Road[11] [p. 3, back]

Ezra Peirce. Says Joes[eph] [Smith] did not know any thing more about Hyglyerics [hieroglyphics][.] Lyman Cowdry was a Lawyer. O[liver]. Cowd[r]y [was a] School Teacher. Characters good. ["]I know that Joe Smith was ignorant." Has pulled sticks with Joes[eph] for a gallon of Brandy but never knew [him] to get drunk. Born 1806.[12] [p. 4]

Orin Reed Lived in time of Smiths. in Town of farmington. I know nothing about the Smiths only by hearsay.[13] [p. 5]

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5. Compare III.B.3, DANFORD BOOTH INTERVIEW, 1881.

6. See page 5 below for the Kelleys' notes of their interview with Reed.

7. See page 4 below for the Kelleys' notes of their interview with Pierce.

8. See page 6 below for the Kelleys' interview of Saunders.

9. The Kelleys were probably directed to Wallace Miner because he owned the property where John H. Gilbert claimed Smith had dug a cave. However, the Kelleys evidently did not interview Miner. For interviews with Miner by others, see III.J.36, WALLACE MINER REMINISCENCE, 1930; and III.J.37, WALLACE MINER REMINISCENCE, 1932.

10. Probably Darius Pierce, son of Justice Nathan Pierce, mentioned in III.J.30, CHARLES BROWN ACCOUNT, 1904; and III.J.38, CARLOS OSGOOD STATEMENT, 1932. The Kelleys evidently did not interview Pierce.

11. See pages 7-8 below for notes of the Kelleys' interview with Chase.

12. Compare III.B.4, EZRA PIERCE INTERVIEW, 1881.

13. Compare III.B.5, ORIN REED INTERVIEW, 1881.

Major Gi[l]bert of Palmyra sat up the type of B[ook]. of M[ormon].[14] [p. 5, back]

Orlando Saunders. Say 78 year old in April[.] Smiths worked for him and they were good fellows to work[.] Hyram and the old man were coopers[.] very good people. Every bod[y] drank in those days and the Smith[s] drank also. but they never got drunk. They were the best family in the neighborhood in case of sickness. One was at my house nearly all the time when my father died. Martin Haris was [*remainder of sentence written sideways on page*] one of the first ones of the Town.[15] [p. 6]

Able D. Chase.

67 years old. Old man Smith was a cooper[.] Alvin was the oldest [-] 6 boy[s] 2 girls—&c

Alvin[,] Hyr[am]—Josep[h][,] [Samuel] Harrison[,] Wm & Carlos. Every one drank. I was young and dont remember only general character—poorly educated[,] ignorant and selfish—super=sticious Shif[t]less but do a good days work.—Loby Joe—[16] [p. 7]

E[gbert] B Granden printed B[ook]. of Mormon[17]

Whitmers went from Senaca Co

Dr. [Philastus] Hulbe[r]t lives at Coneaut. Ohio[18] [p. 7, back]

Jo[sep]h [Smith] got a [singular] looking stone which was dug up out of my fathers well[.] A sister that [had] a stone she could see in, but it was not the one that Smith had

Jackway | Hyram[19]

Jessie [p. 8]

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14. See pages 9-10 below for the Kelleys' notes of their interview with Gilbert.

15. Compare III.B.6, ORLANDO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 1881.

16. Compare III.B.7, ABEL CHASE INTERVIEW, 1881.

17. On Egbert B. Grandin (1806-45), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 77.

18. On Philastus Hurlbut (1809-83), see "Introduction to Philastus Hurlbut Collection."

19. See pages 11-12 for the Kelleys' notes of their interview with Hiram Jackway.

Colonel John H. ~~Lake~~ <Gilbert>[20] Sat up B[ook]. of M[ormon]. Says he changed nothing about it. He punctuated it. Hyrum Brought manuscrip[t] 24 Sheets at a time—

B[ook]. of M[ormon]. was commenced to be printed in Aug=ust 1829—and fin=ished in March 1830[.] Lorenzo Saunders says [Sidney] Rigdon was in the neighborhood befor[e] B[ook] of M[ormon] was published 18 months[.] Lorenzo Saunders lives in New Adrian[,] Mich. [p. 9]

James T. Cob[b][21] of Salt Lake ~~writes~~ <Corresponds> with Colonel Gilbert [p. 9, back]

He knew Lyman and Oliver [Cowdery][.] Lyman was a petifogger[.] Oliver was a school teacher—[Martin] Harris was a very honest farmer but very supersticious—He saw the Book with his spiritual eyes.[22] 79 years of age.[23] [p. 10]

Hyram Jackway 65-6 [year old][.] Saw Joe and his Father Drunk in a hay field[.] Knows nothing about them stealing. Stafford was a Sailor. Wm S=taf-ford He was the one that furnished the Black Sheep. ~~[-]~~ Smiths translated in the farm hous[e]. Maj Gilbert said they translated in a cave [p. 11]

Hyrum and his Father owed Mr. Jaynes 150$

Martin Harris was an honest man[.] [Samuel] Harrison was a good worker for one day or a month.

There were 6 boy[s] and 3 girls. The old lady Smith was kind in sick=ness. Cowdrys good as the general run.

Miss Jayn[e]s says [Pomeroy] Tucker never asked Willard Chase [*remainder of sentence written sideways on page*] about what he knew[24] [p. 12]

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20. "Gilbert" is written in ink.

21. On James T. Cobb (1834-?), see introduction to I.F.3, EMMA SMITH BIDAMON INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPH SMITH III, FEB 1879.

22. Gilbert's account of Harris seeing the plates with his "spiritual eyes" is supported in other sources (e.g., III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 4; III.I.6, JESSE TOWNSEND TO PHINEAS STILES, 24 DEC 1833, 290; see also "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection"). William Kelley's published version neglects to mention this part of the interview (compare III.B.8, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1881).

23. Compare III.B.8, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1881.

24. Compare III.B.9, HIRAM JACKWAY INTERVIEW, 1881.

John Stafford[.] He [Joseph Smith] was a real clever jovial boy—What [Pomeroy] Tucker said about them was false absolutely—My father was never connected with them in any way—Smiths with others were hunting for money previous to obtaining plates[.] My father Wm S[tafford]. had stone which some [p. 13] thought they could look through—and Old Mrs. S[mith]. came there for it but never go it.—76 years old—Common then for any body to have drink in field those days one time Joe while working for some one one after he was married They had boiled cider Joe came in with his shirt torn—his wife felt bad about it & when they went [p. 13., back] home. She put shawl on him—had not been fighting—he was a little contentious but never saw him fight—known him to scuffle—Do a fair days work if hired out to a man but were poor managers. I lived a mile from them. My father is said to have furnished a sheep—but I dont think my father was there at [the] time they say [the] sheep was [p. 14] sacrificed—

Cousin Christopher Stafford [of] Aburn[,] Geauga Co. Ohio, Oliver Cowdry Taught school in house 3 1/2 miles from Palmyry—Cowdry good Character.

[Martin] Harris not very religious before B[ook] of M[ormon]—was an Honorable farmer. Dont know whether he was skeptic=al or visionary—old Joe claimed he [p. 4, back] understood Geology and could tell all kinds of minerals—& they fixed up a dose for him.

Joe was quite illit[erate]—until after they began to have school at their house—~~and~~ they had school at at their house. and studied their Bible—think [-] <Sidney R[igdon]>. might have been there for the reason I cant account for the manuscript [Book of Mormon] in [p. 15] any other way—

Dont know that Sidney was ever there before Book [of Mormon] was published. Sidney was never there that [Philastus] Hulburt or [Eber D.] Howe or [Pomeroy] Tucker Could find out—Have been thinking and hearing about it for the last 50 years. Saw them dig 3 or 4 years before B[ook of Mormon] was found—Joe not there—The [p. 15, back] neighbors use to Claim Sally Chase Could look through stone she had & find money—Willard Chase use to dig when she found where the money was[.] Peaceable among themselves—<old woman> Had a great deal [of] faith [that] their Child[ren]. was going to do something great.[25] [p. 16] ...[26]

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25. Compare III.B.11, JOHN STAFFORD INTERVIEW, 1881.

26. Remainder of notebook contains unrelated notes, blank pages, and an itinerary of costs for traveling.

2.
WILLIAM BRYANT INTERVIEW, 1881

William H. Kelley, "The Hill Cumorah, and the Book of Mormon," *Saints' Herald* 28 (1 June 1881): 162.

EDITORIAL NOTE

William Bryant (1795-?) lived for many years in Hopewell, Ontario County, New York (Federal Census, 1820:63; 1830:98). Soon after 1830 he moved to nearby Manchester. In 1833 he was assessed for two acres on Manchester Lot 22 (Manchester Assessment Records, 1833, Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York), and appears with his wife Mary in the 1840 Manchester census (1840:69). He was also an active member of the Masonic lodge at Canandaigua, New York (McIntosh 1877, 108). Bryant was still living in Manchester with his wife Mary when the Kelleys interviewed him on 6 March 1881.

The Kelleys were drawn to the Manchester home of William and Mary Bryant because the Reverend Thorne had quoted him as saying that he "used to see him [Joseph Smith] frequently, knew him personally to some extent" and that Smith was "a lazy drinking fellow, *loose in his habits everyway*" (III.C.1, *CADILLAC* [MI] *WEEKLY NEWS,* 6 APR 1880). The Bryants subsequently disputed the accuracy of William Kelley's report of the interview (see III.C.6, *ONTARIO COUNTY* [NY] *TIMES,* 27 JUL 1881).

At about 10 a.m. we called at the house of Mr. [William] Bryant, and knocked at the door, which was answered by a lady who gave her name as Mary Bryant. She gave us seats in the room where her husband, William Bryant, was sitting. He is now eighty-five years of age, tall, and lean in flesh, and, during our interview, sat in a stooping posture, with open mouth. His wife informed us that for the last few years his mind had been somewhat impaired. She has a good memory, is seventy-five years of age, intelligent, and seemingly a great talker. We announced that the purpose of our visit was to ascertain some facts from the old settlers, with reference to the people known as Mormons, who used to live there, as it is understood to have been the home of the Smith family and others, at the time the Book of Mormon is alleged to have been discovered.

To this Mr. Bryant in a slow voice replied, "Yes; that big hill you saw coming along, is where they say Joe Smith got the plates; you must have seen

it coming along. Well, you can't find out much from me; I don't know much about them myself; I have seen Joe Smith once or twice; they lived about five miles from where I did; was not personally acquainted with any of them—never went to any of their meetings, and never heard one preach."[1]

What do you know about the character of the family? How were they for honesty? Were they industrious or lazy? We want to know their character among their old neighbors.

"Well, I don't know about that. I never saw them work; the people thought young Joe was a great liar."

What made them think that?

"They thought he lied when he said he found that gold bible."

Before this what was thought of him, as to his telling the truth?

"I never heard anything before this."

What else did he lie about? And how did he get the name of being such a great liar?

"The people said he lied about finding the plates; I don't know whether he lied about anything else; they were all a kind of a low, shiftless set."

What do you mean by that?

"The people said they were awful poor, and poor managers. Joe was an illiterate fellow. If you come from Palmyra, you could have got Tucker's work there, and it would have told you all about them. I have read a great deal about them."[2]

Yes; we have seen Tucker's work, but there are too many big stories in that. Thinking people don't believe them; they ridicule them, and demand the facts; we wish to get some facts which we can stand by.

"I don't know anything myself: I wish I did. Have you been to see Mr. Reed? He lives up north of Manchester; he knows."[3]

Mrs. Bryant.—"My husband don't know anything about them; they

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1. This statement, as reported by William Kelley, directly contradicts what Bryant told the Reverend Thorne: "I used to see him frequently, knew him personally to some extent" (III.C.6, *CADILLAC* [MI] *WEEKLY NEWS,* 6 APR 1880).

2. In his interview with the Reverend Thorne, Bryant had said Smith was "lazy" (see III.C.6, *CADILLAC* [MI] *WEEKLY NEWS,* 6 APR 1880). Kelley represents Bryant as saying he based his opinion of Smith on Pomeroy Tucker's 1867 book (see III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867), although Kelley's notes give no indication that such a discussion occurred.

3. See III.B.5, ORIN REED INTERVIEW, 1881.

did not live in the same neighborhood that we did, and he was not acquainted with them; he don't know anything."[4]

Well, were they drunkards?

Mr. Bryant.—"Everybody drank whiskey in them times."

Did you ever see Joe Smith drunk, or drinking?

"No, I can't say that I did; I only saw him once or twice, when he came to the woolen mill where I worked."

Did you not see Joe drink sometime?

"N-o-e."[5]

Mrs. Bryant.—"He ought not to say anything, for he knows nothing about them; then it has been a long time ago."

Have you stated now all you know about them?

Mr. Bryant.—"Yes; I never knew much about them, anyway."

Did you know any of their associates—Cowdery, Harris, or others?

"No, I never knew any of them."

Mrs. Bryant.—"I knew Cowdery; Lyman Cowdery,[6] I believe, was his

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4. The Bryants later explained this to Thorne as follows: "After a few minutes, Mrs. Bryant, becoming suspicious and fearing they might be entrapped in some way, began excusing her husband, saying among other things, that 'his mind was somewhat impaired,' on account of age, and 'he ought not to say anything'; even saying 'he did not know anything.' This, evidently, was sufficient, in their estimation, to impair, if not set aside, his testimony ... The old man is able, without prompting, to speak for himself, and to compress considerable truth into one short sentence. He has not, by any means, lost his senses, nor is his memory of occurrences a generation past impaired. Events that transpired forty or fifty years ago he remembers distinctly as the events of yesterday" (III.C.6, *ONTARIO COUNTY* [NY] *TIMES,* 27 JUL 1881).

5. Bryant had said to Thorne that Smith was a "drinking fellow," not a drunkard. Kelley represents Bryant as denying he ever saw Smith drunk or drinking, but Kelley's notes indicate that Bryant only denied seeing Smith drunk: "Says Smith was a drun[k]ard, but never saw him drunk. Says he remembers seeing Smith, but says he never saw him drunk" (III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 2).

6. Lyman Cowdery (1802-81), Oliver's older brother, was born in Vermont. He became a lawyer after his marriage to Eliza Alexander (1805-79) in 1825. Later he served as an Ontario County probate judge and served two terms in the state legislature. An entry in Cains C. Robinson's Day Book provides evidence that Lyman had visited Palmyra as early as 1825 (Cains C. Robinson, Day Book, March 1825-July 1827, entry of 17 March 1825, Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York). The Cowderys' first three children (1827-33) were born in Arcadia, Wayne County,

name. They lived next door to us; they were low shacks,—he was a lawyer,—he was always on the wrong side of every case, they said."

Did he ever teach school?

"No, not this one."

Did you know any other one?

"No, I only knew this one and his family; I know they borrowed my churn once, and when it came home, I had to scour it all over before I used it. My father owned the largest house there was in the country at that time."

How were they about being honest, and telling the truth?

"I don't remember anything about that, now."

Were they religious people—pious?

"No; they did not belong to any Church; I know they didn't, for there were only two Churches there, the Baptist and Methodist,—sometimes the Universalists preached there,—they did not belong to either of those Churches."

Mr. Bryant.—"He (Cowdery), was strong against the Masons; he helped to write Morgan's book, they said."[7]

What do you know, now, about the Smiths, or others; you have lived here about seventy-five years, have you not, Mrs. Bryant?

"Yes, I have lived here all my life; but I never knew anything about the Smiths myself; you will find it all in Tucker's work. I have read that. Have you been to see Mr. [Danford] Booth? He lives right up here, on the road running south; he knows all about them, they say."

Very good; we will call and see him.[8] Thank you for your kindness in allowing us to trouble you.

"Oh, it is no trouble; I wish we knew more to tell you."

New York, and their fourth (1836) in Manchester, Ontario County, New York. Lyman died at Elkhorn, Wisconsin (Mehling 1911, 172).

7. I have been unable to confirm this claim, although Danford Booth rejected it as "nonsense" (see III.B.3, DANFORD BOOTH INTERVIEW, 1881).

8. See III.B.3, DANFORD BOOTH INTERVIEW, 1881.

3.
DANFORD BOOTH INTERVIEW, 1881

William H. Kelley, "The Hill Cumorah, and the Book of Mormon," *Saints' Herald* 28 (1 June 1881): 162-63.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Danford Booth (1804-?), whom William Kelley mistakenly called "David Booth," was born in Manchester, New York. After the death of his first wife, Caroline Caldwell, in 1830, Booth married Sally Morgan (d. 1876) the following year. He was an anti-Mason, active in the Whig party, and opposed slavery (see T. Cook 1930, 228). His ninety-acre farm was situated south of Shortsville on Manchester Lot 23 (see Manchester Assessment Records, 1830 and 1833, Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York; Danford and Sally Booth, Indenture, 25 August 1832, Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York). In 1877 historian William H. McIntosh said Booth was "pleasantly situated on one of the fine farms of 'Old Ontario,' and though well advanced in years is still hale and hearty ... [and] held in high esteem" (McIntosh 1876, 188). He was still living in Manchester township, near Shortsville, in July 1881 when he gave a statement to the Reverend Thorne (see III.C.4, DANFORD BOOTH AFFIDAVIT, 1 JUL 1881).

The Kelleys were led to interview Booth because Thorne had quoted him as saying he "knew nothing of the Smiths, except by reputation. ... I was personally acquainted with Oliver [Lyman] Cowdery. ... He was a low pettifogger. ... Their (that is, the Smiths') cat's-paw to do their dirty work" (III.C.6, *CADILLAC* [MI] *WEEKLY NEWS,* 6 APR 1880). When the Kelleys interviewed Booth in March 1881, their questions focused on his statements about Oliver Cowdery, whom he had obviously confused with his older brother Lyman. Booth subsequently complained to Thorne that William Kelley had misrepresented him (see III.C.4, DANFORD BOOTH AFFIDAVIT, 1 JUL 1881).

We then called upon Mr. David Booth,[1] an intelligent gentleman, hale

1. The *Cadillac Weekly News* and *Ontario County Times,* as well as numerous documents from Manchester, refer to him as "Danford Booth." Kelley's mistake is likely due to the brevity of his notes, which record only

and hearty, and upwards of seventy years of age—and made known our business.

Mr. Booth promptly stated that he knew nothing of the Smiths, or their character; did not live in their neighborhood, and never saw either of them; did not know anything about them, or their book.

Did you know the Cowderys?

"I knew one—the lawyer."

What kind of a character was he?

"A low pettifogger."

What do you mean by that?

"Why, he was not a regular lawyer, but took small cases and practiced before justices of the peace. We call them pettifoggers here."

What was his given name?

"Lyman[2]; he never taught school; guess he was no church member; he was a Mason; that was all there was to him. They called him 'loose Cowdery.'"

What did they mean by that?

"Why, he would take small cases; would be on the wrong side, and pettifog before justices, was the reason, I suppose."

Are you certain his name was Lyman? Wasn't it Oliver?

"It has been a long time ago. I think may be his name was Oliver."

Did he drink?

"Every body drank then. I never saw Cowdery drink."[3]

Mr. [William] Bryant, here in the village, told us that he [Cowdery] was a strong Anti Mason, and helped to write Morgan's work.[4]

"Oh, that is all nonsense; they don't know anything about it. Mr. Bryant hasn't been here more than thirty-five years[5]; his wife was raised here—is his

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"D. Booth."

2. On Lyman Cowdery (1802-81), see III.B.2, WILLIAM BRYANT INTERVIEW, 1881, n. 6.

3. Kelley's notes only state, "Was Cowdry a drunkard[?] Every body drank then" (III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 3). Rodger I. Anderson has noted, "The printed version corrects the implication in the notes that Cowdery drank along with everyone else by adding, 'I never saw Cowdery drink'" (R. I. Anderson 1990, 91).

4. See III.B.2, WILLIAM BRYANT INTERVIEW, 1881.

5. The claim that the Bryants had lived in Manchester only thirty-five years, or since about 1845, is incorrect. Bryant was assessed for two acres on Manchester Lot 22 in 1833 (Manchester Assessment Records, 1833, Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York), and appears in the 1840 Manchester census (1840:69). Prior to his residence in Manchester, Bryant lived in nearby Hopewell, Ontario County, since at least

second wife. Cowdery was a strong Mason, so they all said; that is all the religion he had."

Do you know Rev. Thorn,[6] a Presbyterian minister at Manchester?

"Yes; I know him." [p. 162]

What kind of a fellow is he?

"He is a pretty sharp fellow, and will look after his bread and butter, you may depend on that."

Did he ever interview you on this subject?

"No, sir; he never did?"

Did he not call to see what you knew about the Smiths and Cowderys about a year ago?

"No, he never did to my recollection."[7]

Did you know he had a statement of yours published in Michigan in regard to this, last year?

"No, sir; I never heard of it before."

Did you ever give him one to publish?

"I never did—did not know he wanted one."

He will look out for himself, will he?

"He will that; that is him."

You have lived here all your life. Tell us of some one who can tell us all about the people we wish to learn about—some of the old settlers.

["]Squire [Ezra] Pierce and Mr. [Orin] Reed live a few miles north from here, in the neighborhood where the Smith's lived; they know all about them they say.[8] The Smiths never lived in this neighborhood."

Do you know Thomas H. Taylor, of Manchester?

"Yes."

What kind of a fellow is he?

"He is a pretty smart fellow; can do most any thing he undertakes; he is a lawyer, and lectures sometimes."[9]

Mr. Booth, we were told, is a Free Methodist. His address is Shortsville, Ontario Co., New York.

1820 (Federal Census, 1820:63; 1830:98).

6. On Chester C. Thorne, see "Introduction to Chester C. Thorne Collection."

7. This part of the interview was challenged by Booth (see III.C.4, DANFORD BOOTH AFFIDAVIT, 1 JUL 1881).

8. See III.B.4, EZRA PIERCE INTERVIEW, 1881; and III.B.5, ORIN REED INTERVIEW, 1881.

9. See III.B.10, THOMAS H. TAYLOR INTERVIEW, 1881.

4.
EZRA PIERCE INTERVIEW, 1881

William H. Kelley, "The Hill Cumorah, and the Book of Mormon," *Saints' Herald* 28 (1 June 1881): 163.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Ezra Pierce (1806-?) appears in the 1830 federal census of Manchester, New York. His 127-acre farm was situated northwest of Manchester Village on Lots 13 and 15 (Manchester Assessment Records, 1833, Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York; see also Child 1867, 167). He served in the Ontario County Assembly in 1847 and a justice in the court of sessions from 1859 to 1860 (McIntosh 1876, 52, 53). He was still living in Manchester when he was interviewed by the Kelleys in March 1881.

Pierce was not among those interviewed by the Reverend Thorne in 1880, but the Kelleys were encouraged by Danford Booth to visit him. Comparison with the entry in William Kelley's notebook indicates that the following published version is the most expanded of all the interviews (see III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 4).

Following the directions of Mr. [Danford] Booth, we re-passed the town of Manchester, and at one o'clock, p.m., arrived at the house of Ezra Pierce, a very pleasant and hospitable New York farmer, quite well informed in the political history of the country, especially on the Democratic side. Approaching the subject of the desired interview to him, he quickly answered by saying:

"Well, gentlemen, I must first ask you a question; because I went on to give my statement to some parties once, and as it did not suit them, they got mad and began to abuse and insult me; said that I lied about it. Let me ask: Are you Mormons?"

E[dmund]. L.—I am a lawyer, myself; this other gentleman can speak for himself. We don't propose to be anything, especially during this interview; we are here to try to find out some facts, and we don't care who they hit; it is facts that we are after, and you may be sure there will be no abuse, no matter which side they are on.

"All right; that's fair; go ahead."

Were you acquainted with the Smith family?

"Oh, yes; I pulled sticks with Joe for a gallon of brandy once at a log rolling; he was about my age. I was born in 1806. I lived about three miles from the Smiths. Was not very well acquainted with them; but knew them when I saw them. I knew young Joe, who claimed to have found the plates, and old Joe, his father."

Did young Joe drink?

"Every body drank them times."

Did you ever see young Joe drink.

"No, I never did; it was customary in those early days for every body to drink, more or less. They would have it at huskings, and in the harvest field, and places of gathering[1]; the Smiths did not drink more than others."

What about Joe's learning?

"I know that he was ignorant; and he knew no more about hieroglyphics than that stove," pointing to the stove in the room.

Well; go on and state what kind of a family they were—all about them.

"They were poor, and got along by working by the day; the old man had a farm up there, and a log house upon it. The old man Smith and Hyrum were coopers; I never went to the same school that the boys did—they dug for money sometimes; young Joe, he had a stone that he could look through and see where the money was; there were a good many others who dug with them, and Joe used to play all kinds of tricks upon them."[2]

Who said they dug for money?

"Oh, I have heard it lots of times. If my brother was living, he could tell you all about it."

Others dug besides the Smiths, did they?

"Yes; there were others who dug; but I always heard that the Smiths dug the most; one of the Chase's, a young lady, had a stone which she claimed she could look through and see money buried."[3]

Did any body dig for her?

"Yes; I guess they did. They said so."

Then young Joe had some opposition in the seeing money business?

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1. According to one historian, it was a common belief among early Americans that those working outdoors in the heat needed a tonic of liquor and water as a guard against sunstroke (Catherine D. Bowen, *Miracle at Philadelphia* [Boston, 1966], as cited in D. Hill 1977, 459, n. 3).

2. There is nothing in the Kelleys' notes to indicate that they had discussed Joseph Smith's money digging with Pierce. Regarding Smith's stone, see III.B.7, ABEL CHASE INTERVIEW, 1881.

3. This was Sally Chase (see III.B.7, ABEL CHASE INTERVIEW, 1881).

"That is what every body said."

Who was this Miss Chase? Where does she live?

"She is dead now; she was a sister to Abel Chase, who lives upon the Palmyra Road. Have you seen him? He will know all about this. He has been in the cave with the Smiths where the sheep bones were found—people used to think they were making counterfeit money."

Did you ever see any of it?

"No."

Did any of the neighbors?

"No; I never heard any say they did."

Did any one ever catch them trying to pass counterfeit money?

"No; oh! I don't say they made any; it was only talked around."

Who talked it; their friends or enemies, and when was it talked?

"Well; they were not their friends, of course; I never heard it while they lived here; after they went to Kirtland, Ohio, people were talking it."

Young lady, a daughter of Mr. Pierce:

"The sheets, the sheets, pa; what was it about the sheets? Ma said old Mr. Smith come here with the sheets—and she told him to leave. How was it?" (looking to other members of the house).

The sheets; what kind of sheets? (I began to think of ghosts and hobgoblins).

"The sheets, or the leaves, he was carrying around in an old sack, or something."

Our feelings were relieved somewhat when we learned, on further inquiry, that Mr. Smith had called upon them when the Book of Mormon was first published, with a few unbound volumes for sale, and was ordered out of the house by "ma;" nothing like ghosts being connected with the event.

Squire, did you really think they were in the counterfeit money business?

"No; I never thought they did that."

Tell us about the cave you spoke of?

"The cave is over there in the hill now—a large cave."

In what hill? The hill they call "Mormon Hill["]?

"No; it is about a mile from that; but what are you so particular about it for?"

We want to go and see it—we want to see the thing itself. Now you have been there; give us the description, while we write it down, so that we can find it.

"No; I never saw it; besides it is all caved in now, so you could not see anything. There is no cave there now, it is all fallen in."[4]

The young lady.—"Well, why are you so particular for, any way; what good will it do?"

We wish to know just how much truth there is to these stories; and get some facts that we can stand on.

Y[oung]. L[ady].—"But what good will it do?"

Just this; there has been a great many stories told about these people, and the finding of the plates; some believe there is truth in the stories, and some believe they are lies. We are investigating the matter to satisfy ourselves what there is in it.

Y.L.—"Now, you had better turn your backs upon it, and let it go; that is the way to do, there is no truth in it."

That is just the thing at issue. Some say there is truth in it, some say there isn't. It is right to investigate and prove all things; and we wish to find what there is in this.

Y.L.—"But what good will it do to find out the truth about the Book of Mormon?"

If it is what it claims to be, we wish to know it; if false, we wish evidence to prove that.

Y.L.—"What; you spending your time trying to find out about that? If I only knew where your wives are, I would write to them and let them know just what you are doing."

All right; do so. (Here we gave our names and addresses). ...[5]

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4. While not in the Kelley notes, the published interview with Abel Chase has him also denying having seen the cave associated with Smith (see III.B.7, ABEL CHASE INTERVIEW, 1881). Kelley evidently wished to cast doubt on the cave's existence. However, William Kelley subsequently learned from Lorenzo Saunders that Joseph Smith, Sr., had dug a tunnel on his father's property and placed a door on it before his father's death in October 1825 (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 8).

5. The remainder of the discussion between the Kelleys and the unnamed young lady, which deals exclusively with Mormon theology, is here deleted.

5.
ORIN REED INTERVIEW, 1881

William H. Kelley, "The Hill Cumorah, and the Book of Mormon," *Saints' Herald* 28 (1 June 1881): 164-65.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Orin Reed (1804-?) was born in Manchester, New York. Described as an "old pioneer," Reed spent nearly his whole life on his 125-acre farm on Manchester Lot 73, situated on Stafford Road about two miles south of the Smiths' former residence. He died at Manchester (Child 1867, 167; McIntosh 1876, 178; T. Cook 1930, 223).

In 1880 Reed told the Reverend Thorne that he "was acquainted with them [Smiths] but not very intimately. They were too low to associate with." At the same time, Reed's wife, Amanda, "related the story of the sacrifice of a black sheep, in order to obtain a certain treasure which had been abstracted by the devil from its place of concealment beneath the soil of 'Mormon Hill.' The sheep having been procured from one of their neighbors" (III.C.6, *CADILLAC* [MI] *WEEKLY NEWS,* 6 APR 1880). When the Kelleys visited the Reeds in March 1881, they briefly recorded in their notebook: "Orin Reed Lived in time of Smiths. in Town of farmington. I know nothing about the Smiths only by hearsay" (III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 5). Their conversation evidently did not touch on Amanda's statement about the sheep sacrifice. The Reeds subsequently disputed the published version of their interview with the Kelleys (see III.C.2, ORIN AND AMANDA REED AFFIDAVITS, 29 JUN 1881).

Mr. [Ezra] Pierce having referred us to Mr. [Orin] Reed, Orlando Saunders, and Abel Chase, we took leave of him and his intelligent family, and called next at the residence of Mr. Orin Reed.

He was at his home, doing some work about the barn. He is a gentleman of about seventy years of age, hard of hearing, and of pleasant and intelligent countenance. Breaking the object of our call to him, he readily informed us that he knew nothing whatever in regard to the character of Joseph Smith, or his family.

Mr. Reed; were you not acquainted with the Smith family, or some of those early connected with them?

"No, I was not. I lived in the town of Farmington when the Smiths

lived here. I knew nothing about any of them; was not personally acquainted with them, and never heard any of them preach, nor never attended any of their meetings. I have seen Hyrum Smith. He bought a piece of land near here, and lived on it sometime after the others left; but I don't know anything against him."[1]

We were given your name by a number of persons, who claimed that you did know all about them, Mr. Reed? [p. 164]

"Is that so? Well, they are mistaken; I don't know anything about it. I think Mr. Orlando Saunders,[2] living up on the road to Palmyra, will know more about that people than any one around here. He was better acquainted with them; or lived right by them, and had a better opportunity of knowing them."

Yes, we have his name already; but have not seen him yet. Do you know Mr. Thorn,[3] the Presbyterian minister at Manchester, over here?

"Yes, I know him slightly."

Did you not make a statement to him in regard to the character of these men; that they were low persons, and not good associates, or something of the kind?

"I never did."

Did he call on you to find out what you knew about it?

"No, sir, he never did; at least he never let me know anything about it, if he did."[4]

Did you ever see a statement he sent to Michigan, last year, and had published, purporting to be what you and others knew about the Smiths and Cowderys?

"No, I never did; did not know that one was ever published before."

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1. The statement attributed to Reed that Hyrum Smith had remained in Manchester "after the others left" is inaccurate since Hyrum was the first to move away, to Colesville, New York, in early October 1830. The remainder of the Smith family moved later the same month to Fayette, New York. It is possible that Reed confused Hyrum Smith with another "Hiram Smith," probably the son of Shubal Smith, who lived in Manchester until at least 1837 (see discussion in introduction to III.L.9, PALMYRA [NY] MASONIC RECORDS, 1827-1828).

2. See III.B.6, ORLANDO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 1881.

3. On Chester C. Thorne, see "Introduction to Chester C. Thorne Collection."

4. This part of the interview was corrected by Orin and Amanda Reed (see III.C.2, ORIN AND AMANDA REED AFFIDAVITS, 29 JUN 1881).

You think we can find out about these persons from Mr. Saunders, then, Mr. Reed?

"Yes; he is more likely to know than any one round here."

6.
ORLANDO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 1881

William H. Kelley, "The Hill Cumorah, and the Book of Mormon," *Saints' Herald* 28 (1 June 1881): 165.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Orlando Saunders (1803-89), older brother of Lorenzo and Benjamin Saunders, was born in Palmyra, New York. He married Belinda White (1810-?) in 1828 and eventually possessed the family's original homestead situated on Palmyra Lots 44 and 45 (which adjoined the Smiths' property on the northeast corner). He died at Palmyra (U.S. Census, Palmyra, Wayne County, New York, 1860:844; T. Cook 1930, 236; *Portrait and Biographical Album of Hillsdale County, Mich.,* 1888, 976; R. L. Anderson 1970, 307-8).

Leaving Mr. [Orin] Reed, we at once drove to the house of Mr. Orlando Saunders, and found that gentleman, with his wife and two sons, at supper. Mr. Saunders is a man seventy-eight years old, in April, 1881; a fair type of the intelligent New York farmer; seemingly well-to-do in this world's goods, and quite active for a man of his years; and withal, has an honest and thoughtful face.

Entering upon conversation with reference to our business, Mr. Saunders at once said:

"Well, you have come to a poor place to find out anything. I don't know anything against these men, myself." (Evidently judging that we wanted to get something against them, only.)

Were you acquainted with them, Mr. Saunders?

"Yes, sir; I knew all of the Smith family well; there were six boys; Alvin, Hyrum, Joseph, Harrison, William, and Carlos, and there were two girls[1]; the old man was a cooper; they have all worked for me many a day; they were very good people; Young Joe, (as we called him then), has worked for me, and he was a good worker; they all were.[2] I did not consider them good

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1. Actually three girls: Sophronia, Katharine, and Lucy.

2. Orlando Saunders the previous year had told journalist Frederick G. Mather that "the Smith family worked for his father and for himself" and were "good workers" (III.J.13, ORLANDO SAUNDERS, WILLIAM VAN

managers about business, but they were poor people; the old man had a large family."

In what respect did they differ from other people, if at all?

"I never noticed that they were different from other neighbors; they were the best family in the neighborhood in case of sickness; one was at my house nearly all the time when my father died[3]; I always thought them honest; they were owing me some money when they left here; that is, the old man and Hyrum did, and Martin Harris. One of them came back in about a year and paid me."[4]

How were they as to habits of drinking and getting drunk?

["]Everybody drank a little in those days, and the Smiths with the rest; they never got drunk to my knowledge."[5]

What kind of a man was Martin Harris?

CAMP, AND JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEWS WITH FREDERICK G. MATHER, JUL 1880, 198). The Kelleys' notes of their interview with Saunders say nothing specifically about Joseph Jr., only that the "Smiths worked for him and they were good fellows to work" (III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 4). In 1884 Lorenzo Saunders questioned William Kelley's version of the interview with his brother, stating that "Joe Smith ... was a lazy dog. I tell you the truth. He never worked for my brother; because I was there all the time. & Jo Smith never worked there" (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 12).

3. Enoch Saunders died on 10 October 1825 (*Wayne Sentinel,* 18 October 1825; T. Cook 1930, 236). Benjamin Saunders also mentioned the Smiths' kindness, naming especially Joseph Sr. (III.B.13, BENJAMIN SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, CIRCA SEP 1884, 30). Lorenzo Saunders likewise mentioned the Smiths' caring for Enoch Saunders, but mentioned particularly Hyrum's vigilance (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 12; see also III.B.9, HIRAM JACKWAY INTERVIEW, 1881).

4. The matter of Smith paying an old debt is not mentioned in the Kelleys' notes. Concerning this matter, Rodger I. Anderson has remarked: "In Kelley's notes the only entry which could have formed the basis for such a remark is attributed not to Saunders but to Hyrum [Hiram] Jackway, who told Kelley that 'Hyrum [Smith] and his father owed Mr. Janes 150$'" (R. I. Anderson 1990, 105; cf. III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 12).

5. In 1880 Saunders had told Frederick G. Mather that Joseph Smith was "by nature ... peaceably disposed, but when he had taken too much liquor he was inclined to fight, with or without provocation" (III.J.13, ORLANDO SAUNDERS, WILLIAM VAN CAMP, AND JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEWS WITH FREDERICK G. MATHER, JUL 1880, 198).

"He was an honorable man. Martin Harris[6] was one of the first men of the town."

How well did you know young Joseph Smith?

"Oh! just as well as one could very well; he has worked for me many a time,[7] and been about my place a great deal. He stopped with me many a time, when through here, after they went west to Kirtland; he was always a gentleman when about my place."

What did you know about his finding that book, or the plates in the hill over here?

"He always claimed that he saw the angel and received the book; but I don't know any thing about it. Have seen it, but never read it as I know of; didn't care any thing about it."

Well; you seem to differ a little from a good many of the stories told about these people.

"I have told you just what I know about them, and you will have to go somewhere else for a different story."

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6. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

7. See n. 2 above.

7.
ABEL CHASE INTERVIEW, 1881

William H. Kelley, "The Hill Cumorah, and the Book of Mormon," *Saints' Herald* 28 (1 June 1881): 165.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Abel D. Chase (1814-189?), son of Clark and Phebe Chase and brother of Willard Chase, was born at Palmyra, New York. He was a farmer and carpenter living on the Canandaigua Road on Palmyra Lot 48. It is not known how much education Abel received, but he did attend school. He died in Geneva, New York (McIntosh 1877, 213; T. Cook 1930, 233, 234, 238, 243; Reed 1902, 1:214; III.J.12, ABEL D. CHASE STATEMENT, 2 MAY 1879).

Chase was one of eleven persons who signed Hurlbut's general Manchester affidavit on 3 November 1833 (see III.A.1, MANCHESTER RESIDENTS GROUP STATEMENT, 3 NOV 1833). Although Hurlbut did not get an individual statement from Abel Chase, Chase subsequently made a statement in 1879, evidently for James T. Cobb of Salt Lake City, as well as the present 1881 statement for the Kelleys (see III.J.12, ABEL D. CHASE STATEMENT, 2 MAY 1879).

Mr. Saunders giving us the directions to the house of Abel Chase, we next called upon him and ascertained the following:

Mr. Chase.—"I am sixty-seven years old. Knew the Smiths; the old man was a cooper. I was young and don't remember only general character. They were poorly educated, ignorant and superstitious; were kind of shiftless, but would do a good day's work. They used to call Joe, 'Lobby Joe.' He got a singular looking stone, which was dug up out of my father's well; it belonged to my brother Willard, and he could never get it. His mother, old Mrs. Smith, got the stone from mother."[1]

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1. The Kelleys' notes do not mention the stone which belonged to Willard Chase, or Lucy Smith's borrowing it. Kelley likely took the statement about Lucy Smith from John Stafford's interview, which states that Lucy attempted to borrow William Stafford's stone (see III.B.11, JOHN STAFFORD INTERVIEW, 1881, n. 3). In 1879 Abel Chase said "the PEEPSTONE, in which he [Joseph Smith] was accustomed to look, he got

How do you know Joe ever had it?

"Oh, I don't know that; but my brother could never get it back."

Your sister had a stone she could look through and see things, so they have told us; Did you ever see that, Mr. Chase?

"Yes; I have seen it; but that was not the one that old Mrs. Smith got."

Well; could you see things through that?

"I could not; it was a dark looking stone; it was a peculiar stone."[2]

Do you really think your sister could see things by looking through that stone, Mr. Chase?

"Well, she claimed too; and I must say there was something strange about it."

Where is your sister now?

"She is not living now: my brother Willard is dead, also. He would know more than I do about those things."

How did the stone look, you say Mrs. Smith got?

"I don't know; I never saw that."

How do you know she got it?

"They said she did; I was young, and don't remember myself."

Did you ever see the Smiths dig for money; or did you ever see the cave where they say they met at?

"No. I never saw them dig, myself; I never saw the cave."[3]

Well; you were a young man then, how did it come you lived so near, and never saw them do these things?

"I was young, and never went where they were. Don't know anything about it but what I have heard. If you will see Mr. [John H.] Guilbert, at Palmyra, he can tell you more about it than any person else; he knows it all, and has been getting everything he could for years to publish against them; he was in with Tucker in getting out Tucker's work."[4]

All right, Mr. Chase, we will see him this evening if possible. Good day, sir. Much obliged for the trouble.

"Oh! it is no trouble; I only wish I could tell you more."

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of my brother Willard while at work for us digging a well" (III.J.12, ABEL D. CHASE STATEMENT, 2 MAY 1879). Willard said that the stone belonged to him, that Hyrum, not Lucy, had borrowed it, and that he could never get it back (III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833).

2. See I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, n. 154.

3. Ezra Pierce had told the Kelleys that Abel Chase had been to the cave (III.B.4, EZRA PIERCE INTERVIEW, 1881).

4. See III.B.8, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1881.

8.
JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1881

William H. Kelley, "The Hill Cumorah, and the Book of Mormon," *Saints' Herald* 28 (1 June 1881): 165-66.

EDITORIAL NOTE

John H. Gilbert (1802-95),[1] chief typesetter of the Book of Mormon, had not been interviewed by the Reverend Thorne in 1880, but the Kelleys were directed to him by Abel Chase (see III.B.7, ABEL CHASE INTERVIEW, 1881). Gilbert later expressed serious objections to the published version of his interview with the Kelleys (see III.C.5, JOHN H. GILBERT AFFIDAVIT, 12 JUL 1881; III.H.5, JOHN H. GILBERT TO THOMAS GREGG, 19 JUN 1881; and III.H.7, JOHN H. GILBERT TO CLARK BRADEN, 27 FEB 1884). For additional statements by Gilbert, consult "John H. Gilbert Collection."

Early in the evening we called upon Mr. John H. Gilbert, at his residence, and made known our desire for an interview, &c. He seemed quite free to give us all the information he had upon the subject, and said he had been for the past forty-five or fifty years doing all he could to find out what he could about the Smiths and Book of Mormon. He is a man seventy-nine years of age, and quite active even in this time of life.

What did you know about the Smiths, Mr. Gilbert?

"I knew nothing myself; have seen Joseph Smith a few times, but not acquainted with him. Saw Hyrum[2] quite often. I am the party that set the type from the original manuscript for the Book of Mormon. They translated it in a cave.[3] I would know that manuscript to-day if I should

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1. On John H. Gilbert, see "Introduction to John H. Gilbert Collection."

2. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

3. There is nothing in the Kelleys' notes about Gilbert's mention of a cave, but he did mention hearing about the cave in an 1893 interview (see III.H.11, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1893). Pomeroy Tucker also reported the rumor that Smith had initially translated in a cave near the Amos Miner residence in Palmyra (III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT,

see it. The most of it was in Oliver Cowdery's handwriting. Some in Joseph's wife's; a small part though. Hyrum Smith always brought the manuscript to the office; he would have it under his coat, and all buttoned up as carefully as though it was so much gold. He said at the time it was translated from plates by the power of God,[4] and they were very particular about it. We had a great deal of trouble with it. It was not punctuated at all. They did not know anything about punctuation, and we had to do that ourselves."

Well; did you change any part of it when you were setting the type?

"No, sir; we never changed it at all."

Why did you not change it and correct it?

"Because they would not allow us to; they were very particular about that. We never changed it in the least. Oh, well; there might have been one or two words that I changed the spelling of; I believe I did change the spelling of one, and perhaps two, but no more."[5]

Did you set all of the type, or did some one help you?

"I did the whole of it myself, and helped to read the proof, too; there was no one who worked at that but myself.[6] Did you ever see one of the

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1867, 48-49). According to Lorenzo Saunders, however, the cave was closed by October 1825 (see III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 8).

4. Gilbert told Thomas Gregg, "[This is] utterly false. I never had any conversation with Hyrum in regard to the translation" (III.H.5, JOHN H. GILBERT TO THOMAS GREGG, 19 JUN 1881, 38).

5. In his letter to Thomas Gregg, Gilbert disputed Kelley's version: "In regard to the change of spelling two words, he words my answer entirely different from what I said to him. I told him distinctly that I changed the spelling of one word, which occurred twice in one form—no believing about it. The word changed was 'travail,' spelled 'travel' in both instances, showing that the copyist did not know the difference" (III.H.5, JOHN H. GILBERT TO THOMAS GREGG, 19 JUN 1881, 38). Gilbert had previously told James T. Cobb the same story (III.H.2, JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 10 FEB 1879, 2; see also III.H.7, JOHN H. GILBERT TO CLARK BRADEN, 27 FEB 1884).

6. Gilbert disputed this Kelley quote, stating: "I did not tell him I set all the type, as he reports me saying" (III.H.5, JOHN H. GILBERT TO THOMAS GREGG, 19 JUN 1881, 38). J. H. Bortles helped Gilbert set type (III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892), but he reportedly said in 1888 that "of the 580 of which the book consisted he set in type about 500 pages himself" (III.H.9, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, SEP 1888).

first copies? I have one here that was never bound. Mr. Grandin, the printer, gave it to me. If you ever saw a Book of Mormon you will see that they changed it afterwards."

They did! Well, let us see your copy; that is a good point. How is it changed now?

"I will show you," (bringing out his copy). "Here on the title page it says," (reading) "'Joseph Smith, Jr[.], author and proprietor.' Afterwards, in getting out other editions they left that out, and only claimed that Joseph Smith translated it."

Well, did they claim anything else than that he was the translator when they brought the manuscript to you?

"Oh, no; they claimed that he was translating it by means of some instruments he got at the same time he did the plates, and that the Lord helped him."[7]

Was he educated, do you know? [p. 165]

"Oh, not at all then; but I understand that afterwards he made great advancement, and was quite a scholar and orator."

How do you account for the production of the Book of Mormon, Mr. Gilbert, then, if Joseph Smith was so illiterate?

"Well, that is the difficult question. It must have been from the Spaulding romance—you have heard of that, I suppose. The parties here then never could have been the authors of it, certainly. I have been for the last forty-five or fifty years trying to get the key to that thing; but we have never been able to make the connecting yet. For some years past I have been corresponding with a person in Salt Lake, by the name of Cobb,[8] who is getting out a work against the Mormons; but we have never been able to find out what we wanted."

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7. Concerning the exchange about the Book of Mormon's title page, Gilbert said: "In regard to Smith claiming to be the author, etc., I told him I understood in later editions he only claimed to be translator, etc.; the balance of the story in regard to this authorship, is all his own coining and answering" (III.H.5, JOHN H. GILBERT TO THOMAS GREGG, 19 JUN 1881, 38). While Gilbert disputed Kelley's amplification, he made a similar remark in an 1877 interview (III.H.1, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1877).

8. On James T. Cobb (1834-?), who began collecting information about Mormon origins in the late 1870s for a book, see introduction to I.F.3, EMMA SMITH BIDAMON INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPH SMITH III, FEB 1879). For unknown reasons Cobb never published his collected statements.

If you could only connect Sidney Rigdon[9] with Smith some way, you could get up a theory.

"Yes; that is just where the trouble lies; the manuscript was put in our hands in August, 1829, and all printed by March, 1830, and we can not find that Rigdon was ever about here, or in this State, until sometime in the Fall of 1830. But I think I have got a way out of the difficulty now. A fellow that used to be here, by the name of Saunders, Lorenzo Saunders,[10] was back here some time ago, and I was asking him about it. At first he said he did not remember of ever seeing Rigdon until after 1830 sometime; but after studying it over a while, he said it seemed to him that one time he was over to Smiths, and that there was a stranger he never saw before, and that they said it was Rigdon. I told him about Cobb, of Utah, and asked him if he would send his affidavit that he saw Rigdon before the book was published, if he (Cobb), would write to him; he finally said he would, and I wrote to Cobb about it,[11] and gave Saunders' address, and after a long time, I got a letter from him, saying he had written three letters to Saunders, and could get no answer. I then sat down and wrote Saunders a letter myself, reminding him of his promise, and wrote to Cobb also about it; and after a long time Cobb wrote me again, that Saunders had written to him; but I have never learned how satisfactory it was, or whether he made the affidavit or not."[12]

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9. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

10. On Lorenzo Saunders (1811-88), see introduction to III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884.

11. See III.H.4, JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 14 OCT 1879.

12. Gilbert had told James T. Cobb in 1879 that Lorenzo Saunders "says he knows that RIGDON was hanging around Smith's for EIGHTEEN MONTHS PRIOR TO THE PUBLISHING OF THE MORMON BIBLE" (III.H.4, JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 14 OCT 1879). Regarding Kelley's version of the interview, Gilbert told Thomas Gregg: "The long paragraph in relation to Mr. Cobb and Lorenzo Saunders is a mixed mess of truth and falsehood. When I asked Mr. S[aunders] if he knew whether [Sidney] Rigdon was hanging around Smith previous to the publication of the M[ormon] B[ible], he said, 'Yes, at least eighteen months before.' there was no hesitancy about it; and this is what I told Kelley. You can see how he reported the matter" (III.H.5, JOHN H. GILBERT TO THOMAS GREGG, 19 JUN 1881, 38). However, Saunders later admitted to the Kelleys that he had hesitated somewhat before coming to that conclusion (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 13-14).

Is that Saunders a brother of the Saunders living down here, Orlando Saunders?

"Yes, sir: they are brothers."

Is he older or younger?

"Younger; about fifteen years younger."[13]

Then he must have been quite young before the Book of Mormon was published?

"Yes, he was young."

This Saunders down here don't talk like a great many people; he seems to think the Smiths were very good people; we have been there to-day.

"Oh, I don't think the Smiths were as bad as people let on for. Now Tucker, in his work, told too many big things; nobody could believe his stories."[14]

Did the Smiths ever dig for money?

"Yes; I can tell you where you can find persons who know all about that; can take you to the very place."

Can you? All right, give us their names.

"The Jackaway boys—two old bachelors, and their sister, an old maid, live together, right up the street going north, near the north part of the town; they can tell you all about it, and show you the very places where they dug."[15]

What will you take for your copy of the Book of Mormon; or will you sell it?

"Yes, I will sell it."

How much for it?

"I will take Five Hundred Dollars for it, and no less; I have known them to sell for more than that."[16]

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13. Orlando (1803-89) was about eight years older than Lorenzo (1811-88).

14. Gilbert told Thomas Gregg, "What he charges me with saying about the Smiths and Tucker's book, is all his own coining" (III.H.5, JOHN H. GILBERT TO THOMAS GREGG, 19 JUN 1881, 38).

15. See III.B.9, HIRAM JACKWAY INTERVIEW, 1881.

16. Gilbert disputed this statement: "I did not tell Kelley that I had known a copy or copies of the M[ormon]. B[ible]. to sell for $500, or more than that; that is one of his misrepresentations" (III.H.5, JOHN H. GILBERT TO THOMAS GREGG, 19 JUN 1881, 38). However, Gilbert may have made a similar statement which Kelley unintentionally distorted. Gilbert had previously written to Diedrich Willers, Jr., of Fayette, New York, that he hoped some day to get $500 for his personal copy of the Book of Mormon (Letter dated 5 January 1881, in ibid., n. 8).

Well, I am not buying at those figures, thank you.

What kind of a man was Martin Harris?

"He was a very honest farmer, but very superstitious."

What was he before his name was connected with the Book of Mormon?

"Not anything, I believe; he was a kind of a skeptic."

What do you mean by his being superstitious? Was he religious?

"Well, I don't know about that; but he pretended to see things."[17]

What do you think of the Book of Mormon, as a book; you are well posted in it?

"Oh, there is nothing taught in the book but what is good; there is no denying that; it is the claim of being from God that I strike at."

Well, is it any more wonderful than that God gave the Bible?

"No, not a bit; and there is a good deal more evidence to show that that is divine than there is for some of the books in the Bible. Why, it is all nonsense to think that Moses wrote some of the books attributed to him, in the Bible."

Then you don't believe the "fish story," either, Mr. Gilbert?

"No; nor that Jonah swallowed the whale."

How about Sampson catching the three hundred foxes, and the firebrands?

"Yes, that is a good one; you fellows will do."

Much obliged, Mr. Gilbert.

"You are quite welcome. I wish I could give you more than I have."

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17. According to the Kelleys' notes, Gilbert originally said Martin Harris claimed to have seen the plates "with his spiritual eyes" (III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 10). Gilbert is known to have made this claim on other occasions (III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 4). Kelley changed Gilbert's statement to say Harris "pretended to see things."

9.
HIRAM JACKWAY INTERVIEW, 1881

William H. Kelley, "The Hill Cumorah, and the Book of Mormon," *Saints' Herald* 28 (1 June 1881): 166-67.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Hiram Jackway(s) (1815-85), son of Mary and David Strong Jackway, was born at Palmyra, New York. His grandfather, William Jackway, came to Palmyra in 1787 and worked as a hatter, a trade passed on to his son David. The Jackways occupied a farm situated on Stafford Road about a half mile south of Palmyra Village and about a mile and a half north of the Smiths' residence (T. Cook 1930, 217-18). Hiram's father, David, was evidently upset when the Smiths left Manchester without paying a debt (see Jessee 1984, 231-32). He died unmarried at Palmyra (*Palmyra Courier,* 1 March 1916; Jackway Family File, Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York).

The Kelleys were directed to Jackway by John H. Gilbert. He was then living with a younger brother, Jesse, and sister, Abigail, in a "little wood-colored one-story house" situated at the west end of Main Street on the north side opposite Stafford Street (T. Cook 1930, 122).

Acting upon Mr. [John H.] Gilbert's advice, we at once called upon the Jackways, and found the older of the boys and the sister, ready to talk of what they knew. They had Tucker's work on the small table by, which they offered to sell us for three dollars, and then we could read for ourselves; but being quite familiar with its weaknesses, we declined to purchase at the price.

The conversation upon the main topic was as follows:—

What is your age?

["]I will be sixty-six years old on my next birthday," said Mr. Jackway. (The lady did not answer).

How far did you live from town at the time the Smiths, and those of their comrades, were in this country?

"One half mile south of Palmyra."

Were you acquainted with Joseph Smith and his early followers?

"Yes, I knew them; seen them a many a time—old Joe and young Joe."

How far did you live from them?

"It was about a mile."

You know about their digging for money, so Mr. Gilbert said; he sent us to you?

"Oh, yes, I can show you the places now; there are three places, over there where they dug."

Well, we want to see them. Did you help them dig?

"No, I never helped them."

Well, you saw them digging?

"No, I never saw them digging."

How do you know they dug the holes you refer to?

"I don't know they dug them; *but the holes are there.*"

Did anybody else dig for money at that time there?

"I believe there were some others that dug; but I did not see them."

Do you know any of them?

"I only know one now; he lives up at Canandaigua."

(Mr. Jackway gave us the name, but for some cause we fail to find it in our notes).

What do you know about the Smiths' character?

"I don't know much about that."

Would they steal, get drunk, &c?

"Don't know anything about their stealing. Joe and his father got drunk once."

Where was that?

"It was in the hay field; Joe and his father wrestled, and Joe threw the old man down, and he cried."

What did he cry for?

"Because Joe was the best man I guess."

What did they drink to make them drunk?

"They drank cider."[1]

Got drunk so they could not walk, on cider, did they?

"No; they could walk, but they cut up and acted funny."

Did you ever see them drink, or drunk, any other time?

"No; not as I remember."

What kind of a woman was the old lady Smith?

"I don't know; I never was at the house. She was kind in sickness."[2]

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1. John H. Gilbert said in 1881, "Mr. [Hiram] Jackway tells me he did not tell Kelley that Joe and his father got drunk on cider, but on whiskey" (III.H.5, JOHN H. GILBERT TO THOMAS GREGG, 19 JUN 1881, 38).

2. See III.B.6, ORLANDO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 1881.

Quite a number here in town, to day, have told us it was two and a half to three miles from Palmyra to where the Smiths lived; how is that?

"Yes; it was about three miles."

(How Jackway lived within half a mile of town and only a mile from them he did not explain).[3]

Where was Joe when he was translating his book?

"At home; it was translated in the farmhouse."

Mr. Gilbert, across here, said it was done in a cave; now you don't agree? What does Tucker say? (reading Tucker).[4]

"They all differ. Now, Tucker has a statement from Willard Chase in his book, and Chase said Tucker never called on him at all to find out what he knew."[5]

Lady.[6]—"Yes; I have heard Willard Chase say Tucker never even asked him for what he knew, and Chase lived next door to him, too. Chase is dead now."[7]

Well; did you ever see Hulbert or Howe, that published works?

"Yes; Hulbert came around first, I believe, soon after the thing started, and they had gone to Kirtland, Ohio, trying to find things against them; and there have been a good many around trying to connect Sidney Rigdon with them."

What kind of men were Martin Harris[8] and Oliver Cowdery[9]? [p. 166]

"Harris was an industrious, honest man; lived north here, two miles. The Cowderys were as good as the general run of people. Have you seen

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3. The Smiths lived a little less than two miles from Palmyra Village.

4. See III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 48-49.

5. In his preface, Tucker named Willard Chase for possible corroboration, and elsewhere in the book he seems to rely on Chase's 1833 statement to Hurlbut (see III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 19, 26, 31; and III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833).

6. This was a "Miss Jayn[e]s," according to the Kelleys' notes (III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 12).

7. Willard Chase and Pomeroy Tucker's names follow one another in the 1860 census of Palmyra. Lorenzo Saunders, Willard Chase's brother-in-law, also reported, "Tucker never called on William [Willard] Chase for evidence. He had the paralisis and was not competent to give testimony" (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, n. 39).

8. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

9. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

Dr. Stafford?[10] He lives at Rochester. His father, William Stafford,[11] is the one that furnished the 'black sheep' Tucker tells about there."[12]

He is? Well; do you know about that?

"No; only what Tucker says there."

10. See III.B.11, JOHN STAFFORD INTERVIEW, 1881.

11. On William Stafford (c. 1786-1863), see introduction to III.A.13, WILLIAM STAFFORD STATEMENT, 8 DEC 1833.

12. See III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 24-25.

10.
THOMAS H. TAYLOR INTERVIEW, 1881

William H. Kelley, "The Hill Cumorah, and the Book of Mormon," *Saints' Herald* 28 (1 June 1881): 167-68.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Thomas H. Taylor (c. 1814-?) was born in Scotland. Taylor, with his wife Permela (b. c. 1826), is listed in the 1880 census of Manchester, New York, as a sixty-six-year-old "Blacksmith" (1880:301A). According to Danford Booth, Taylor was a "lawyer ... [who] lectures sometimes" (III.B.3, DANFORD BOOTH INTERVIEW, 1881).

Of all the notes the Kelleys kept, their interview with Taylor is the briefest; the published version which follows therefore depends heavily on William Kelley's memory (compare III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 1).

During the time of making the interviews in Manchester, we accidentally met the Thomas H. Taylor, referred to by Mr. [Danford] Booth in the interview with him. He is a Scotchman by birth, of advanced age, but very robust and active. Somewhat of the knock-down and drag-out style; is a public speaker and lecturer, and practices law to some extent. He claims to be one of the original parties with John Brown[1] at Harper's Ferry—all through the fight there—and previous to the war of the rebellion, was engaged in piloting the darkey to Canada and freedom. He was a soldier throughout the war, and saw hard service. In religion he follows Col. Robert G. Ingersol.[2] To our enquiries if he was acquainted with the Smiths, and the early settlers throughout that part, sometimes called Mormons, he said:

"Yes; I knew them very well; they were very nice men, too; the only

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1. John Brown was an ardent abolitionist who advocated mob violence as a remedy. In 1859 he captured Harper's Ferry, Virginia, and the U.S. Armory. Apprehended by Robert E. Lee at Harper's Ferry, Brown was convicted of treason and hanged (*Who Was Who in America,* 1967, 146-47).

2. Robert Green Ingersoll, born in 1833 in Dresden, New York, was active in national politics and well known for his works and speeches against the Christian religion (e.g., *Some Mistakes of Moses*, 1879) (Wilson and Fiske 1887, 3:348).

trouble was they were ahead of the people; and the people, as in every such case turned out to abuse them, because they had the manhood to stand for their own convictions. I have seen such work all through life, and when I was working with John Brown for the freedom of my fellow man, I often got in tight places; and if it had not been for Gerritt Smith,[3] Wendell Phillips[4] and some others, who gave me their influence and money, I don't know how I would ever got [get] through."

What did the Smiths do that the people abused them so?

"They did not do any thing. Why! these rascals at one time took Joseph Smith and ducked him in the pond that you see over there, just because he preached what he believed and for nothing else. And if Jesus Christ had been there, they would have done the same to him. Now I don't believe like he did; but every man has a right to his religious opinions, and to advocate his views, too; if people don't like it, let them come out and meet him on the stand, and shew his error. Smith was always ready to exchange views with the best men they had."

Why didn't they like Smith?

"To tell the truth, there was something about him they could not understand; someway he knew more than they did, and it made them mad."

But a good many tell terrible stories, about them being low people, rogues, and liars, and such things. How is that?

"Oh! they are a set of d—d liars. I have had a home here, and been here, except when on business, all my life—ever since I came to this country, and I know these fellows; they make these lies on Smith, because they love a lie better than the truth. I can take you to a great many old settlers here who will substantiate what I say, and if you want to go, just come around to my place across the street there, and I'll go with you."

Well, that is very kind, Mr. Taylor, and fair; if we have time we will call around and give you a chance; but we are first going to see these fellows who, so rumor says, know so much against them.

"All right; but you will find they don't know anything against those

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3. Gerrit Smith was one of the best known abolitionists in the United States and founder of the Liberty party in 1840. He served as a member of the House of Representatives from New York, 1853-54. He aided John Brown in the Harper's Ferry scheme. He died in 1874 (*Who Was Who in America,* 1967, 560).

4. Wendell Phillips was a lawyer, a nationwide lecturer on abolition, and president of the Anti-Slavery Society, 1865. He died in 1884 (*Who Was Who in America,* 1967, 480).

men when you put them down to it; they could never sustain anything against Smith."

Do you think Smith ever got any plates out of the hill he claimed to?

"Yes; I rather think he did. Why not he find something as well as any body else. Right over here, in Illinois and Ohio, in mounds there, they have discovered copper plates since, with hieroglyphics all over them[5]; and quite a number of the old settlers around here testified that Smith showed the plates to them—they were good, honest men, and what is the sense in saying they lied? Now, I never saw the Book of Mormon—don't know anything about it, nor care; and don't know as it was ever translated from the plates. You have heard about the Spaulding romance; and some claim that it is nothing but the books of the Bible that were rejected by the compilers of the Bible; but all this don't prove that Smith never got any plates."

Do you know Rev. Thorn,[6] here in Manchester?

"The Presbyterian preacher?"

Yes, that is the one.

"I know him."

What kind of a fellow is he?

"Well, originally he was nothing. He got [p. 167] some money, and went off to college a while, and came back a Presbyterian preacher. He knows just what he got there, and feels stuck up, and is now preaching for his bread and butter; and if they should take away his salary, he wouldn't last twenty-four hours."

We are much obliged, Mr. Taylor, for your kindness.

"You are welcome, and if you will drive back, I will go with you and show you persons who can tell you all about those people."

We thus left Mr. Taylor, but for want of time, could not then return and accept his kind offer to show us around; hope to be able to do so some time in the future.[7]

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5. See Vogel 1986, 18-19.

6. On Chester C. Thorne, see "Introduction to Chester C. Thorne Collection."

7. This hope was never realized.

11.
JOHN STAFFORD INTERVIEW, 1881

William H. Kelley, "The Hill Cumorah, and the Book of Mormon," *Saints' Herald* 28 (1 June 1881): 167.

EDITORIAL NOTE

John Stafford (1805-1904), oldest son of William Stafford, was born in Manchester, New York. After studying medicine under Dr. Alexander McIntyre, he attended Hobart College at Geneva, New York, receiving his license to practice medicine and surgery in 1841. Thereafter he lived in Manchester as a practicing physician until 1876, when he moved to Rochester, New York. A biographical sketch commemorating his ninety-ninth birthday said of him: "Dr. Stafford is well acquainted with the beginnings of Mormonism. He knew the Smith family well, and was present at the first baptism, when old Granny Smith and Sally Rockwell were 'dipped' and came up 'white as snow'" (*Shortsville Enterprise,* 18 March 1904).[1] He died at Rochester (Child 1867, 168; T. Cook 1930, 222).

The Kelleys were directed to John Stafford by Hiram Jackway (see III.B.9, HIRAM JACKWAY INTERVIEW, 1881). William Kelley's account of the interview with Stafford is probably the most accurate of the 1881 Kelley interviews since the notes are quite lengthy and detailed compared with the others (compare III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 13-16).

Taking leave of the Jackways, in due time we called upon Dr. John Stafford, at Rochester, N.Y. He is now a retired physician, being too aged

1. Regarding the early use of the phrase "white as snow," the following anecdote is interesting: "It is stated that about two months after the church was organized baptismal services were being held a short distance from Smith's home, each one of the disciples being led into a small brook and, after being plunged beneath the water, the convert was told that he was now white as snow. After witnessing the operation for a while several young men bent on mischief proceeded to Smith's home and procured a pail of whitewash, and going to the hen house baptized the hens in the pail, and on leaving hung a card on the door stating that 'all are now white as snow'" (*Wayne County Journal,* 11 July 1907).

and infirm to practice. Answering a question as to the character of Joseph Smith, he said:

"He was a real clever, jovial boy. What Tucker said about them was false, absolutely. My father, William Stafford,[2] was never connected with them in any way. The Smiths, with others, were digging for money before Joe got the plates. My father had a stone, which some thought they could look through, and old Mrs. Smith came there after it one day, but never got it.[3] Saw them digging one time for money; (this was three or four years before the Book of Mormon was found), the Smiths and others. The old man and Hyrum were there, I think, but Joseph was not there.[4] The neighbors used to claim Sally Chase could look at a stone she had, and see money.[5] Willard Chase[6] used to dig when she found where the money was. Don't know as any body ever found any money."

What was the character of Smith, as to his drinking?

"It was common then for everybody to drink, and to have drink in the field; one time Joe, while working for some one after he was married, drank too much boiled cider. He came in with his shirt torn; his wife felt bad about it, and when they went home, she put her shawl on him."[7]

Had he been fighting and drunk?

"No; he had been scuffling with some of the boys. Never saw him fight; have known him to scuffle[8]; would do a fair day's work if hired out to a man; but were poor managers."

What about that black sheep your father let them have?

"I have heard that story, but don't think my father was there at the time they say Smith got the sheep. I don't know anything about it."

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2. On William Stafford (c. 1786-1863), see introduction to III.A.13, WILLIAM STAFFORD STATEMENT, 8 DEC 1833.

3. Samantha (Stafford) Payne said, "She [Lucy Smith] once came to my mother to get a stone the children had found, of curious shape. She wanted to use it as a peepstone" (III.J.19, SAMANTHA PAYNE STATEMENT, CIRCA 1884).

4. There is nothing in the Kelleys' notes corresponding with this sentence.

5. See I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, n. 154.

6. On Willard Chase (1798-1871), see introduction to III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833.

7. See III.A.2, BARTON STAFFORD STATEMENT, 3 NOV 1833.

8. The published version differs from the Kelleys' notes: "[Smith] was a little contentious but never saw him fight—known him to scuffle" (III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 14).

You were living at home at the time, and it seems you ought to know if they got a sheep, or stole one, from your father?

"They never stole one, I am sure; they may have got one sometime."

Well, Doctor, you know pretty well whether that story is true or not, that Tucker tells. What do you think of it?

"I don't think it is true. I would have heard more about it, that is true.[9] I lived a mile from Smiths; am seventy-six years old. They were peaceable among themselves. The old woman had a great deal of faith that their children were going to do something great. Joe was quite illiterate. After they began to have school at their house, he improved greatly."

Did they have school in their own house?

"Yes, sir; they had school in their house, and studied the Bible."

Who was their teacher?

"They did not have any teacher; they taught themselves."

Did you know Oliver Cowdery[10]?

"Yes; he taught school on the Canandaigua road, where the stone

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9. Some have cited this statement as proof that Hurlbut colored or somehow falsified William Stafford's affidavit (R. L. Anderson 1970, 295; Backman 1980, 119). However, Stafford told the sheep story both before and after his 1833 statement (see III.J.15, STEPHEN S. HARDING TO THOMAS GREGG, FEB 1882, 56; III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 24-25; III.D.4, CORNELIUS R. STAFFORD, [23] MAR 1884; and III.J.36, WALLACE MINER REMINISCENCE, 1930). Still, several observations are important to understand Kelley's report. First, as Rodger I. Anderson states, John Stafford's "conclusion [was] based upon ignorance, not upon any fact which came under his observation." Second, the Kelleys' notes indicate only that Stafford said, "My father is said to have furnished a sheep—but I don't think my father was there at [the] time they say [the] sheep was sacrificed." "In preparing this material for publication," Anderson observes, "William Kelley replaced the word 'sacrificed' with 'got the sheep,' and then added a lengthy question-and-answer section in which Stafford not only confessed his ignorance of the matter but also expressed suspicion that the whole story is a fabrication. Deleting this added material, Stafford's report to the Kelleys contains only the information that he had heard the story but did not think his father was there at the time of the sheep's sacrifice. This agrees perfectly with his father's recollection that he was not present when the sheep was 'killed pursuant to commandment'" (R. I. Anderson 1990, 52-53; cf. III.A.13, WILLIAM STAFFORD STATEMENT, 8 DEC 1833). Because John Stafford resided in Rochester, the Reverend Thorne did not solicit a response from him.

10. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

school-house now stands; just three and a half miles south of Palmyra. Cowdery was a man of good character."

What do you know about Martin Harris[11]?

"He was an honorable farmer; he was not very religious before the Book of Mormon was published. Don't know whether he was skeptical or visionary. Old Joe claimed he underderstood [understood] geology, and could tell all kinds of minerals; and one time, down at Manchester, in the grocery, the boys all got pretty full, and thought they would have some fun, and they fixed up a dose for him." (We omit the ingredients of the dose, because improper for publication).

If young Smith was as illiterate as you say, Doctor, how do you account for the Book of Mormon?

"Well, I can't; except that Sidney Rigdon[12] was connected with them."

What makes you think he was connected with them?

"Because I can't account for the Book of Mormon any other way."

Was Rigdon ever around there before the Book of Mormon was published?

"No; not as we could ever find out. Sidney Rigdon was never there, that Hulburt, or Howe, or Tucker could find out."

Well; you have been looking out for the facts a long time, have you not, Doctor?

"Yes; I have been thinking and hearing about it for the last fifty years, and lived right among all their old neighbors there most of the time."

And no one has ever been able to trace the acquaintance of Rigdon and Smith, until after the Book of Mormon was published, and Rigdon proselyted by Pratt, in Ohio?

"Not that I know of."

Did you know the Pratts,—Parley or Orson Pratt[13]?

"No; have heard of them."

Did you know David Whitmer[14]?

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11. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

12. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

13. On Parley P. Pratt (1807-57), see introduction to III.K.16, PARLEY P. PRATT AUTOBIOGRAPHY (PART I), CIRCA 1854. On Orson Pratt (1811-70), see introduction to I.A.16, ORSON PRATT ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1839.

14. On David Whitmer (1805-88), see "Introduction to David Whitmer Collection."

No; he lived in Seneca county, New York?

Have you told now all you know about the Smiths and the Book of Mormon?

"All that I can recollect."

Here we bade the Doctor, whom we found to be quite a gentleman,—affable, and ready to converse,—good day."

12.
LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEPTEMBER 1884

Lorenzo Saunders, Interviewed by William H. Kelley, 17 September 1884, 1-18, E. L. Kelley Papers, RLDS Church Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Lorenzo Saunders (1811-88), son of Enoch and Abigail (Holmes) Saunders, was born at Palmyra, New York. He married Calista Taber (1812-56) on 17 July 1833. A carpenter by trade, Saunders built a cider mill in the 1840s but sold out in 1854 and moved to Hillsdale County, Michigan. Saunders farmed in Wheatland township before moving to Reading township in 1863. After the death of his first wife, he married Laurina Cane (1822-95) in 1867. He died at his residence in Cambria, Hillsdale County, Michigan, on 10 February 1888 (see T. Cook 1930, 134, 239; *Portrait and Biographical Album of Hillsdale County, Mich.,* 1888, 446; *Reading Telephone News,* 17 February 1888; Cemetery Records, Mitchell Public Library, Hillsdale, Michigan; III.D.9, LORENZO SAUNDERS STATEMENT, 21 JUL 1887).

The Kelleys were directed to Saunders by John H. Gilbert of Palmyra, New York, in 1881 (see III.B.8, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1881), but apparently did not have occasion to interview him until 1884. On 10 September 1884 E. L. Kelley wrote from Kirtland, Ohio, where he had recently concluded a public debate with Church of Christ minister Clark Braden (February-March 1884), to his brother William in Michigan, instructing him to get Lorenzo Saunders's statement:

> Have him [Saunders] dictate what he wants [to] put down and write it and then read to him and have him sign [it] if possible. ... [Clark] Braden claimed Saunders had made an affidavit stating that he saw Ridgon &c. Find out as to this and whether Braden has been there trying to get him to testify and if he has what he said (E. L. Kelley to William H. Kelley, 10 September 1884, W. H. Kelley Papers, RLDS Church Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri).

William Kelley interviewed Saunders in Reading, Michigan, on 17

September 1884. The following day he wrote from Coldwater, Michigan, to his brother E. L. Kelley in Kirtland, Ohio:

> I was down to reading [Michigan] yesterday and Saw Saunders. He is hard against us. He is writing up a statement for Braden.[1] I fooled him completely. He took me to be Braden's Brother. I was there about three hours and he never knew the difference. He signed his Statement, but there was no one present but his wife & daughter (William H. Kelley to E. L. Kelley, 18 September 1884, W. H. Kelley Papers, RLDS Church Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri).

The present document is in William Kelley's handwriting in purple pencil. Because it is not signed by Lorenzo Saunders, his name appearing in Kelley's hand, the document is evidently a subsequent copy of the now-lost original interview.[2]

Reading[,] Ind. [Michigan] Sep. 17[,] 1884

The following interview was had with Lorenzo Saunders by Wm. H. Kelley at Mr. L[orenzo]. Saunder's house September 17[,] 1884 at the above named place; which was read to and signed by Mr. Saunders as being correct.

Q. How old are you Mr. Saunders?
A. I was born in Palmyra[,] Wayne Co.[,] N[ew]. York June 7, 1811.
Q. What kind of a woman was old Mother Smith[3]?
A. She was a poor simple thing, about 1/2 witted—could not tell a

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1. On 12 November 1884 Saunders told E. L. Kelley, "I have not give[n] much of a statement at all to Braden; not yet. But he has written & he is waiting now for those fellows at the Bank to take it" (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 2). Nothing further is known about a possible statement Saunders may have given to Clark Braden.

2. Because Kelley evidently regretted not having adequate witness to Saunders's endorsement, Kelley returned two days later and had Saunders sign and notarize another version of the interview, which was nearly identical in wording, but rearranged with some of the statements deleted (see III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884). For other statements of Lorenzo Saunders not included in the Kelley collection, see III.D.9, LORENZO SAUNDERS STATEMENT, 21 JUL 1887; and III.J.20, LORENZO SAUNDERS TO THOMAS GREGG, 28 JAN 1885.

3. On Lucy Smith (1775-1856), see "Introduction to Lucy Smith Collection."

straight story. In 1828 or 30 the story was around the neighborhood that Catherine Smith[4] was pregnant by [Sidney] Rigdon[5] and there was a young Savior to be born, but at the birth it was a female child. This story was only hear say.[6] [p. 1] The old lady was indus=trious but nasty. Used to paint chairs. Would take an old rag and rub them with lamp black, &c.

Q. Was you ever acquainted with young Joe Smith?

A. The first time I ever went to Sabbath School I went with young Joe Smith at the old Presbyterian Church.[7]

Q. What kind of person was the old man Smith[8]?

A. Oh! he would go to Turky Shoots and get drunk; pretend to enchant their guns so that they could not kill the Turky.[9] ~~would blow in~~ Q. How would he do that?

A. He would blow in the gun and feel around the lock then tell them it was charmed and they could not kill the turky.[10]

Q. Did you ever see Joe's peep stone? A. Yes. It looked like a babies foot. The old man and Joe came into ~~our barn~~ <their cooper shop> one day [p. 2] when it was rainy; and I asked young Joe if he ~~would not look and see~~

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4. On Katharine Smith (1813-1900), see "Introduction to Katharine Smith Collection."

5. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

6. The last two sentences about Katharine Smith's pregnancy were deleted from III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884, 1-2. However, Saunders repeated the rumor about Katharine in III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 21. Saunders may have read about Katharine's alleged pregnancy in III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 81-82. The claim that Katherine gave birth to Rigdon's child in early 1831 would imply Smith family contact with the Campbellite minister before December 1830. This, of course, is incorrect. Katharine married Wilkins Jenkins in 1831 and gave birth to her first child, Elizabeth, on 9 April 1832 (L. Smith 1853, 43).

7. This question and answer were deleted from III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884. S. F. Anderick said Smith joined the Presbyterian church (III.D.8, S. F. ANDERICK STATEMENT, 24 JUN 1887).

8. On Joseph Smith, Sr. (1771-1840), see "Introduction to Joseph Smith, Sr., Collection."

9. The words "get drunk" are crossed out in III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884, 1; see also III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 12.

10. The words "it was charmed" were deleted from III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884, 1.

~~if he~~ could not ~~see~~ look ~~something~~ <into futurity?> Joe said he could not look into any holy thing. The old man had on the dirtyest and raggedest shirt I ever—saw all full of holes—and he <said he> cannot look into my shirt then.[11]

Q. Did you ever see Sidney Rig=don in the neighborhood where you lived previous to 1830?

A. Yes. In March 1827. I went over to Joe Smith's to eat sugar, and as I went over I saw, about 20 rods from the ~~road~~ <house>, five or six men <standing and> talking. one was well dressed.

Q. Did you know their names?

A. Yes. ~~One~~ <It> was Peter Ingersol,[12] Sam=uel Lawrence,[13] George Proper,[14] the old man [Orin] Rockwell, father of Porter Rockwell,[15] and the well dressed man. They stood ten rods from the road. When I got to the house [Samuel] Harrison (Smith)[16] told me [p. 3] that it was Sidney Rigdon, i.e. the well dressed man. ~~That fall (1827) Peter Ingersol and I met him (Rigdon) in the road between Palmyra and Ingersols.~~

Q. Did you see him after that previous to 1830?

A. Yes. I saw him ~~that same~~ in <the> fall <just before Joseph went to Pennsylvania> (1827). Peter Ingersol and I met him (Rigdon) in the Road between Palmyra and Inger=sols.[17] I never saw him any more until he came to Palmy=ra to preach the Mormon Bible.[18]

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11. This story was told with more clarity to E. L. Kelley (see III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 11).

12. On Peter Ingersoll (c. 1789-1867), see introduction to III.A.9, PETER INGERSOLL STATEMENT, 2 DEC 1833.

13. On Samuel F. Lawrence, see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, n. 147.

14. George Proper, in his forties, is listed in the 1830 Palmyra, Wayne County, New York, census (1830:50). Pomeroy Tucker lists George Proper among Smith's early "disciples" (III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 38).

15. On Orrin Porter Rockwell (1813-78), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 121.

16. On Samuel Harrison Smith (1808-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 13.

17. For a more detailed account, see III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 15.

18. While Saunders sounds definite about seeing Ridgon at the Smith residence in March 1827, later narrowing the date to the 10th or 15th (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 7), he subsequently told E. L. Kelley that the date had been arrived at only after the

Q. Are you acquainted with Maj. [John H.] Gilbert[19] of Palmyra.

A. Yes. Four years ago I went to Palmyra to see my Brothers, and I met Gilbert. He wanted to know if I ~~eve[r]~~ remembered see=ing Sidney Rigdon in that neighbor=hood previous to 1830 when he come preaching the Mormon Bible. He said Abel Chase testified that he thought he saw Rigdon before that time, but was not certain.[20] [p. 4] Says I to Gilbert[,] Sidney Rig=don was about Smiths before 1830 in my opinion. Gilbert asked if I would make aff=idavit that I saw Rigdon at Smiths before that time? I told him I would think the matter over. After a while I think I

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prodding of John H. Gilbert and James T. Cobb and a great deal of reflection on his part (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 13-14; see also III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884, 2; III.D.9, LORENZO SAUNDERS STATEMENT, 21 JUL 1887; III.J.20, LORENZO SAUNDERS TO THOMAS GREGG, 28 JAN 1885; and III.H.4, JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 14 OCT 1879). On 17 September 1884 Saunders said Samuel Harrison had told him the well dressed man was Sidney Rigdon (as also in III.D.9, LORENZO SAUNDERS STATEMENT, 21 JUL 1887), but in his 12 November 1884 interview he said it was Hyrum who identified Rigdon (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 7). Abel D. Chase and Anna Ruth Eaton also made similar statements about the stranger (see III.J.12, ABEL D. CHASE STATEMENT, 2 MAY 1879; III.J.14, ANNA RUTH EATON STATEMENT, 1881). But Pomeroy Tucker's initial investigation of 1867, which included contact with Saunders, stated that the Smiths "withheld all explanation of his [the stranger's] identity" (III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 47).

19. On John H. Gilbert (1802-95), see "Introduction to John H. Gilbert Collection."

20. In February 1879 Gilbert told James T. Cobb: "I do not think there is a single person living here or near here, who *knows* that Rigdon visited Smith prior to 1830" (III.H.2, JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 10 FEB 1879). On 2 May 1879 Abel D. Chase said, "During some of my visits at the Smiths, I saw a STRANGER there WHO THEY SAID WAS MR. RIGDON. He was at Smith's several times, and it was in the year 1827 when I first saw him there, as near as I can recollect" (III.J.12, ABEL D. CHASE STATEMENT, 2 MAY 1879). The following October Gilbert again wrote Cobb explaining that he had just learned that Lorenzo Saunders "knows that RIGDON was hanging around Smith's for EIGHTEEN MONTHS PRIOR TO THE PUBLISHING OF THE MORMON BIBLE" (III.H.4, JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 14 OCT 1879). On Abel Chase, see introduction to III.B.7, ABEL CHASE INTERVIEW, 1881.

told him I would. After I got home a while I received a letter from [James T.] Cobb[21] of Salt Lake [City]. Gilbert wrote to Cobb and gave him my ad=dress. I wrote to Cobb the next Spring. Gilbert wrote to me ~~after I returned home from~~ I think in Nov[ember]. after I returned home, asking why I did not answer Cobbs letter. While I was writing an answer to Cobb's first letter my house caught fire and burnt. Burnt <up> every thing I had and there was no insurance. Lost a thousand dollars. ~~It~~ <I> was some time thinking the matter over [p. 5] before writing to Cobb and during that time my house burnt. It had been a long time since those transactions and it was difficult to fix dates. But I have it now so that I can tell it right off. I have read the statements of Peter Ingersol and Samuel Lawrence ~~relating to it~~.[22]

Lorenzo Saunders [p. 6]

Q. How come you to go over to Smiths to eat sugar?

A. The Smiths were great sugar makers; they had a large bush and sugared off every day at their house and they wanted me to ~~go over~~ come over and eat sugar. They made seven thousand lbs. [pounds] one year and took the bounty in the County—of $50.00. They were pretty good fellows in their way, but they were shiftless and ~~money diggers~~ were in the money digging business.

Q. Did you ever see the Smiths dig ~~yourself or [others?]~~ for money?

A. I never saw them digging for money. I saw them dig in a hill, said to be for that purpose; that young Joe could look in his peep stone and see a man sitting in a gold chair. Old Joe said he was king i.e. the man in the chair; a king of [p. 7] one of the ~~Nephites or Lamanites~~ <tribes> who was shut in there in the time of one of their big battles. This digging was a mile

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21. On James T. Cobb, see introduction to I.F.3, EMMA SMITH BIDAMON INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPH SMITH III, FEB 1879.

22. Saunders's statement relating to the statements of Peter Ingersoll and Samuel Lawrence is problematic. Peter Ingersoll is known to have made one statement to Hurlbut in 1833, but Samuel Lawrence is not known to have made a statement. Perhaps Saunders refers to statements that are now lost. If so, it is difficult to explain who took the statements and how Saunders could have read them. Ingersoll died in 1867, before the Kelleys began collecting statements. It is also possible that Saunders was mistaken, perhaps incorrectly referring to E. D. Howe's publication of Willard Chase's 1833 statement that names Lawrence as a source (see III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833). Note that on page 11 of this interview Saunders repeats the same story Chase told about Lawrence.

from Smiths. Don't know as there was ever anything in the cave. The cave was on our place. This was in 1826. The cave had a door to it. We tore it off and sunk it in a pit of water where they got dirt to cover a cole [coal] pit.[23]

Q. How did you fix the date that you saw Sidney Rigdon at Smiths previous to 1830?

A. When I was talking with Gilbert and told him that I would think the matter over and see if I could make affidavit and I fixed the time in my mind by remembering that I had gone there to eat sugar.

Q. Was Peter Ingersol and Samuel <Lawrence> acquainted with Sidney Rigdon?

A. Yes, they were both ~~ac~~ [p. 8] acquainted with Rigdon in 1827. Samuel Lawrence took Joe over into Pennsylvania and gave him <a> better education.[24] I saw Rigdon in 1830 preach with the Bible in one hand and the Book of Mormon in the other (as illustrated in Tuckers work opening the book and showing the picture) and he said the Bible was now fulfilled and done away and the Book of Mormon was to take its place. The meeting was held in Palmyra in the young mens Library Soci<e>ty.[25]

Q. Did you ever hear Joe give an account of finding the plates?

A. Yes. He ~~made the statement in~~ gave the account in my father's house. He said he was in the woods at prayer and the angel touched him on the shoulders and he arose, and the angel told him where the plates were and he [p. 9] could take his oldest Brother with him in a year from that time and go and get them.[26] But his oldest Brother died before the year was out. At the

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23. This question and answer were deleted from III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884. The year, however, was 1825 or earlier, since in a subsequent telling Saunders said it was before his father's death, which occurred in October 1825 (see III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 8).

24. See ms. p. 11; III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884, 5; and III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 243-44.

25. The last sentence was deleted from III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884, 5. See also III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 6; III.D.9, LORENZO SAUNDERS STATEMENT, 21 JUL 1887; III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 76-79.

26. See also III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 16. The instruction to bring Alvin the following year is supported in other sources (III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 242-43; I.C.1, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., INTER-

end of the time he went to the place to get the plates the angel asked where his Brother was. I told him he was dead. The angel told him there would be an other appointed. Joseph chose Samuel Lawrence. But he did not go.[27]

Q. What kind of a woman was Joseph's wife?

A. Joseph's wife was a pretty woman; as pretty a woman as I ever saw. When she came to the Smiths she was ~~very much~~ disappointed and used to come to our house and sit down and cry. Said she was deceived and got into a hard place. Joe said in our house to my mother, the angel said he must get ~~married~~ him a wife and take her and go and [p. 10] and get the plates. Sam Lawrence took him over into Pennsylvania and introduced him to Emma Hale.[28] I dont know as Joe had ever been in Pennsylvania before, but him and Sam Lawrence ~~was~~ had been deviling around—no telling where they had gone. Joe told Sam Lawrence that there was a silver mine over in Pennsylvania—told him ~~if he would~~ he might share in it with him; but behold he wanted an introduction to Emma Hale is the way it turned out. Sam Lawrence told me so.[29]

After he was married and brought his wife home, the angel told him he must procure a black horse to go and get the plates. He come one night to get my Brothers black horse and went off and said he got the plates. He borrowed the horse.[30] [p. 11]

VIEW WITH FAYETTE LAPHAM, 1830, 306-7;IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 1).

27. This question and answer were deleted from III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884. The association of Samuel Lawrence with Smith's visit to the hill is also reflected in III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 243. In a subsequent interview with E. L. Kelley, Saunders said the person Smith was to bring was Emma Hale (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 16). Other sources also name Emma (III.A.15, HENRY HARRIS STATEMENT, CIRCA 1833, 252; III.F.1, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH JOHN A. CLARK, 1827 & 1828; and IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 1).

28. On Emma Hale Smith (1804-79), see "Introduction to Emma Smith Collection."

29. Lawrence apparently told Willard Chase the same story (III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 243-44). W. R. Hine mentioned that Smith search for treasure on the west bank of the Susquehanna River (IV.D.10, WILLIAM R. HINE STATEMENT, CIRCA MAR 1885).

30. A portion of this answer (everything after "Joe said in our house ...") was deleted from III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW,

Q. Did you know Martin Harris[31]?

A. Yes, I was acquainted with Martin Harris. He was called a square toed upright man until after he got in with the Smiths. The picture in Tuckers Book looks just like him.[32]

Q. What kind of woman was Martin's wife[33]?

A. She was large on self esteem. Her face was on top of her head and her combativeness was large and her cautiousness was not large enough to ~~over ballance~~ control them. She had an irritable temper and was a hard piece to live with. Martin used to whale her. You find in that <little book> Hu[l]berts and Hows Mormons Unveiled.[34]

When I was down to see my Brothers four years ago, in a conversation with Gilbert when I first got there ~~he~~ <it was then> he said he did not know that Sidney Rigdon was ever here (at Palmyra) ~~believed he was~~ previous to 1830 <he believed he was, but he had no evidence.> Said they had been [p. 12] studying on it for 35 or 40 years, but they could not get the evidence. Said if they could only make that point the fraud would come out. He said he could come the nearest proving it by Able Chase, but Chase was not certain.[35]

When I got ready to come home (I was there three weeks) Gilbert said he wanted to see me before I left. He was working ~~down~~ on the canal. He came to me as I was about to start home and it was then that I told him that I had thought the matter over and made up my mind that I could swear that I saw Rigdon in the neighborhood in the Spring of 1827. That is what [he]

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20 SEP 1884, 5-6. Saunders's story of Smith borrowing a horse from one of his brothers conflicts with other sources which state that he borrowed Joseph Knight's horse and wagon (see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:61-62; and IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 2). Perhaps Saunders was thinking of an earlier visit to the hill, possibly Smith's 1825 visit with Samuel Lawrence.

31. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

32. See Tucker 1867, plate between pages 40-41. The last sentence referring to Martin Harris's picture was deleted in III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884, 6.

33. On Lucy Harris (1792-1837), see introduction to III.A.7, LUCY HARRIS STATEMENT, 29 NOV 1833.

34. The last sentence was deleted from III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884, 7. Saunders evidently refers to Lucy Harris's statement in Howe's 1834 book (III.A.7, LUCY HARRIS STATEMENT, 29 NOV 1833).

35. See III.J.12, ABEL D. CHASE STATEMENT, 2 MAY 1979.

wanted I should write Cobb. This conversation was in Palmyra in front of John Sanders store, or Wm. Jarvis' block rather★[36] [p. 13]

Q. Did you know Oliver Cowdery[37]?

A. Yes. I was well acquainted with Cowdery. He took a school near us, taught three <or four> days, then got an other teacher to take his place and he went over to write for Joe. I never knew anything against Cowdery. He was a peaceable fellow. The first I knew he was baptizing.[38]

Q. Do you know anything about Tucker?★[39]

A. Yes. I knew him.

Q. Is he alive?

A. No, he is dead. At the time Tucker was publishing his Book, I was there at Tuckers house, and he said I had a better memory than he did, and he wanted me to help him on his Book and I did so. He promised to give

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36. Note on back of page 12 reads: "present at the time Wm. Tucker[,] my oldest brother Orlando[,] Frances Bord[l]es, A P. Crandel & others, It was in fair time." Probably William H. Tucker of the firm Tucker & Son, who sold out in 1876 to Wright Gardner, tavern keeper Franklin Bortles, and Averston P. Crandel, who was described as "a very prominent man in village affairs" (T. Cook 1930, 74, 106, 209).

37. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

38. This question and answer were deleted from III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884. A note on back of page 13 reads: "I saw him [Cowdery] baptize Dolly Proper the homliest old lady I ever saw. She was tall and they compared her to a barlow Jack Knife. She had long arms and fingers. Us boys used to take a log chain and wraped it across the old house (where Smith's lived) when Joseph and [Samuel] Har[ri]son was preaching and tell them that was the Chain that was agoing to bind the devil. Bill Smith promised me once that he never would join the Mormons. But afterwards he did." See also III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 7. Pomeroy Tucker named George and Dolly Proper of Palmyra as among Smith's early "disciples" (III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 38). According to Lucy Smith, Cowdery waited until the end of the school term before leaving for Harmony, Pennsylvania (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:93).

39. Note on back of page 5 reads: "Tucker never called on William [Willard] Chase for evidence. He had the poralisis and was not competent to give testimony." A "Miss Jayn[e]s" had told the Kelleys in 1881 that "I have heard Willard Chase say Tucker never asked him for what he knew, and Chase said Tucker never called on him at all to find out what he knew" (III.B.9, HIRAM JACKWAY INTERVIEW, 1881).

me a Book, and he sent me this one (holding up Tuckers work) when the book was published. [p. 14]

Q. What kind of a fellow was Tucker?

A. He was a funn loving dairing fellow. All of the Tuckers were. Tucker was a good neighbor.[40]

40. On Pomeroy Tucker (1802-70), see introduction to III.J.5, POMEROY TUCKER REMINISCENCE, 1858.

13.
BENJAMIN SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, CIRCA SEPTEMBER 1884

Benjamin Saunders, Interviewed by William H. Kelley, circa September 1884, 19-30, "Miscellany," RLDS Church Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Benjamin Saunders (1814-93) was evidently born in Manchester, New York. He was a carpenter and joiner by trade. In the 1850s he sold his house and barn and moved to Hillsdale County, Michigan. Saunders died on 28 December 1893 at Bankers, Hillsdale County, Michigan. Saunders's wife, Ruth (1818-94), was indicted for performing an illegal abortion which resulted in the death of a young woman; however, both Benjamin and Ruth died before the case came to trial (T. Cook 1930, 234; *Reading Hustler,* 20 December 1893, 27 December 1893, 3 January 1894, 12 September 1894; Cemetery Records, Mitchell Public Library, Hillsdale, Michigan).

The following interview of Benjamin Saunders at Bankers, Hillsdale County, Michigan, was probably conducted by William H. Kelley shortly after his interview with Lorenzo Saunders on 17 September 1884 since it appears as a continuation of the document recording Kelley's interview with Lorenzo (Lorenzo Saunders's interview comprising pages 1-18 and Benjamin Saunders's interview pages 19-30). Both interviews are written in purple pencil.

Benjamin Saunders lives at Bankers. Was Born July 2[,] 1814 was 70 years old last July—Lived about 1/2 mile from Joseph Smith. I was acqu=ainted with the old man Smith and all the boys and girls. Oldest boy was Alvin.[1] (died I rem[embe]r when he died) Hirum.[2] Joseph.[3]

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1. On Alvin Smith (1798-1823), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 10.

2. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

3. On Joseph Smith (1805-44), see "Introduction to Joseph Smith, Jr., Collection."

Ha=rrison.[4] Wm.[5] Don Carlos.[6] Oldest girl's name was Sophronia.[7] ~~Cathlin next~~ Catherine.[8] Forgoten the young=est childs name it was a girl.[9] They were good workers by days work [p. 19]

They were coopers ~~trade~~ by trade. Did not like to make steady busines[s] of it. <They were> Big hearty fellows. Their morals were good. The old man sometimes would drink until he felt quite happy at our log rollings and raisings: but he was not quarrelsome. He was not a bad man. would attend regularly to his business. It was rulable for people to drink at those times[.] The Smiths were no worse than others, and not as bad as some, but still they would take a drink. also in haying and harvest [p. 20]

I knew young Joseph just as well as I did my own brothers. went to the Same school ~~together~~ with the younger boys. ~~He was older~~ Joseph was older some what than I was and [mated?] with larger boys. We used to coon hunt together ie with Wm. and Carlos. Mother Smith was a pretty good old lady. No one could go back on her I dont think who knew her. Do you think she would steel [steal]? No. I dont think any of them would steel [steal]. [Without?] the boys might get into a water mellon patch [p. 21] or something like that, as many of the boys did. ~~Jo~~ would do it more for mis=chief than any thing else I have done that myself. It was not considered stealing, in those days. Did you ever See young Joe drunk? No. Did you ever See any of the boys drunk. No. Were they profane? No. Not very much. Was quite clear from that. I heard ~~from~~ <Joe> tell my Mother and Sister how he procured the plates. He said he was directed by an angel where it was. [p. 22] He went in the night to get the plates. When he took the plates there was something down near the box that looked some like a toad that rose up into a man which forbid him to take the plates.[10] He found a big pair of Spectacles <also

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4. On Samuel Harrison Smith (1808-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 13.

5. On William Smith (1811-93), see "Introduction to William Smith Collection."

6. On Don Carlos Smith (1816-41), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 15.

7. On Sophronia Smith (1803-76), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 16.

8. On Katharine Smith (1813-1900), see "Introduction to Katharine Smith Collection."

9. On Lucy Smith (1821-82), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 18.

10. Benjamin Saunders repeated the story of the toad in the box to others (see III.J.24, ORSON SAUNDERS ACCOUNT, 1893). Willard Chase told a similar story (III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT,

with the plates>. As he went home some one tried to get the plates away from him. He said he kn=ock[ed] the man down and got away. Had two or three skirmishes on the way. I saw his hand all sweled up and he said it was done in [p. 23] hitting the enemy. He told his story just as earnestly as any one could.[11] He seemed to be=lieve all he said. Did you believe him? No. <Why?> Did not look consistent to my idea.

<was Mother Smith a good housekeeper?> ~~Mother Smith was~~ <She was> not the neatest house keeper but she made bread and was a good cook. She was a good fair house keeper. There was a big family of them and they all lived to home. [p. 24]

[...][12]

Do you remember of ever Seeing Sidney Rigdon in that neighborhood pre=vious to 1830. I dont remember of seeing him at all. Not at any time. Cant be positive about it. ~~They~~ <The Smiths> held meetings at their house. I was there when they first bapt=ized. Oliver Cowdery[13] did the baptizing.

CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 242). Richard L. Anderson has argued that Benjamin Saunders's account of the toad "was in all probability based on Chase's account" (R. L. Anderson 1987, 62-63, 71, n. 19). Despite his relationship to Chase, Saunders claims firsthand information, stating that he heard it from Joseph Smith in 1827. However, Saunders apparently mixes details from 1823 and 1827, probably due to either faulty memory or method of reporting.

11. The story of Smith being attacked and injuring his thumb is also related in I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:63-66; I.E.3, HERBERT S. SALISBURY REMINISCENCES, 1945 & 1945; and III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 166-67.

12. At this point, two pages from an apparently early draft of Lorenzo Saunders's interview of 17 September 1884 were misplaced with the Benjamin Saunders interview. The pages were subsequently numbered 25 and 26 by archivists. The text is as follows (compare III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 7-8):

"After a while I think I told him that I would.

"(The Smiths made 4<7>000 lbs [pounds] of sugar) took the premium of [$]50.00

"I never <saw> Smiths dig for money. I saw them dig in a hill, said to be for that purpose, that Joe might look in his peep stone, and see a man sitting in a gold chair—<the old ~~king~~ Joe Said [—] he was King>—this was in 1826[.] This digging was a mile from Smiths. Dont know as there was ever any thing [in the cave] [p. 25] We tore the door out and sunk it in a pit when they got dirt to cover a cole [coal] pitt. [p. 26]"

13. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

Old brother <Smith> was baptized at that time and I think old Mrs Rockwell.[14] Rigdon was not there that I have any remembrance of.

Was you acquainted with Harris[15]? Yes. [p. 27]

what kind of a man was he? He was a pretty good man. Stood as well as any body in that Town, until he joined the Mormons. What did ~~not~~ he do that was bad then? Not any thing only as against himself. He bound him=self to pay for the pr=inting of the Mormon Bible and he never recovered his loss.[16] Morally he was just the same that he was before he joined them[.]

Did you know oliver Cowd[e]r[y]? I know him [p. 28] by sight. His reputation was good.

Was you acquainted with Dr. P[hilastus]. Hulburt[17]? He came to me but he could not get out of me what he wanted; so [he] went <to> others. Did you ever see Joseph use the peep stone? No. I have seen Sally (Sarah) Chase peep or look in her seer Stone a many a time. She would look for any thing. I have had it in my hand. It was a blu=ish stone about the Size of my thumb.[18] She had it fit in to a paddle like fit in very nicely. [p. 29][19]

My oldest Brother had some Cattle stray away. She claimed she could see them but they were found right in the opposite direction from where she said they were. <Were the Smiths good neighbors?> They were a good family in sickness. The old man stood by my Father when he ~~pre~~ breathed his last.[20]

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14. Sarah Witt Rockwell, mother of Orrin Porter Rockwell, is said in Smith's 1839 History to have been baptized on 6 April 1830, whereas the History Draft says two or three days later (see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 38, n. 90; DRAFT:9-10). See also III.D.4, CORNELIUS R. STAFFORD STATEMENT, [23] MAR 1885; III.D.5, CAROLINE ROCKWELL SMITH STATEMENT, 25 MAR 1885; and introduction to III.B.11, JOHN STAFFORD INTERVIEW, 1881.

15. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

16. See III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829.

17. On Philastus Hurlbut (1809-83), see "Introduction to Philastus Hurlbut Collection."

18. Lucy Smith said Sally Chase possessed a greenish-colored stone (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, 1845, MS:69).

19. This page is misnumbered 30 in the original.

20. Orlando Saunders also mentioned the Smiths' kindness in sickness and that at least one of the Smiths attended his father until his death (III.B.6, ORLANDO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 1881). Lorenzo Saunders mentioned particularly Hyrum's vigilance (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS

Joseph ~~did~~ had but little education. They were big stout men but never was quarrelsom. would put up with any thing and every thing rather than have a quarrel. [p. 30][21]

INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 12). Enoch Saunders died on 10 October 1825 (*Wayne Sentinel,* 18 October 1825).

21. This page is misnumbered as page 29 in the original.

14.
LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEPTEMBER 1884

Lorenzo Saunders, Interviewed by William H. Kelley, 20 September 1884, 1-7, "Miscellany," RLDS Church Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Lorenzo Saunders was first interviewed by William H. Kelley on 17 September 1884 (see III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884). Kelley evidently returned on 20 September with a different version of the interview, which rearranged and deleted a number of the questions and answers, but retained nearly identical wording. Following his brother's instructions, Kelley read this version to Saunders and had him sign it before a notary public (see E. L. Kelley to William H. Kelley, 10 September 1884, quoted in introduction to ibid.). On 12 November 1884 Saunders told E. L. Kelley: "Your brother came here one day with a little book; he wanted a statement. He said that he was a brother to the debater. I supposed he was the brother to Clark Braden. That is what I supposed; And I went & give him a statement; He did not want an affidavit. And he went away & he was gone two days; and he came back again, & he wanted to take the statement over again; he claimed his book was not large enough, so he explained it. I went on & give him a statement in that book. He took it that day and went away" (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 1).

Three handwritings are apparent in the original document: the text by William H. Kelley, Lorenzo Saunders's signature, and notarization by W. B. Worshrop. Kelley evidently sent the present seven-page document to his brother in Kirtland as indicated by a penciled note on the back of page 7: "Brother E. L. [-] [write?] one / as Soon as you get this and / oblige G. F. Stroh / Address Fremont[,] Steuben Co / Ind."[1]

Reading Mich. Sept. 20[,] 1884

q What is your name Mr. Saunders?

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1. For notes on the text, consult III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884.

a Lorenzo Saunders.

q How old are you Mr. Saunders?

a I was born in Palmyra <Wayne Co.> New York June 7[,] 1811.

q How far did you live from the Smith family? Joseph Smith? a[nswer] About one half mile

q What kind of a person was the old man Smith? a[nswer]. Oh: he would go to turky shoots~~—get drunk—~~pretend to enchant their guns so they could not kill a turky.

q How would he do that? ~~a~~

a He would blow in the gun and feel around the lock and then tell them they could not kill the turky.

q Did you ever see young Joe's peep stone?

a Yes. It looked like a babies foot. The old man and Joe came into their Cooper shop one day when I was there—it was rainy—and I asked young Joe if he could see into futurity? He answered that he could not look into any holy thing. The old man had on the dirtiest and raggest shirt I ever saw—all full of holes—and he spoke up and said, he cannot look into my shirt then.

q What kind of a woman was old mother Smith? the old lady?

a She was a poor simple thing about half witted—could not tell a straight <story>. [p. 1]

She was industrious but rather nasty. Used to paint chairs. Would take an old rag and rub them up with lamp black.

q Did you ever See Sidney Rigdon in the neighborhood where you lived previous to the 1830?

a In March 18~~30~~<27>[2] about the middle of the month, I went over to Joe Smiths to eat sugar; and as I went over I saw five or six men standing and Talking. One was well dressed. They were about twenty rods from Smith's house.

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2. This correction is in pencil. Whatever the authority of the correction, the original "1830" was an obvious error that contradicted the previous reading in III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 3.

q Did you know their names.

a Yes. It was Peter Ingersol, Samuel Law=rence, George proper, the old Man Rockwell—Father of Port[er] Rockwell and the well dressed man. They stood ten rods from the road. When I got to the house Harrison [Samuel Smith] told me it was Sidney Rigdon. i.e. The well dressed man.

q Did you see him after that previous to the year 1830.

a Yes, I saw him in the fall—1827—just before Joseph went to Pennsylvania. Peter Ingersol and I met him in the road between Palmyra and Ingersols. I never saw him any more until ~~I~~ <he> came to Palmyra to preach the Mormon Bible.

q Are you acquainted with Major [John H.] Gilbert of Palmyra? a[nswer]. Yes. Four years [p. 2] ago I went to Palmyra to see my brothers and I met Gilbert. He wanted to know if I remembered seeing ~~gilbert~~ Sidney Rigdon in that neighborhood previous to 1830 when he came pr[e]aching the Mormon Bible. He said Abel Chase testified that he thought he saw Rigdon before that time but was not certain. Says I to Gilbert[,] Sidney Rigdon was about Smiths before 1830 in my opinion. Gil=bert then asked me if I would make affidavit that I saw Rigdon ~~in~~ at Smiths before that time—1830? I told him I would think the matter over. After awhile I think I told him that I would. After I got home a while I received a letter from [James T.] Cobb of Salt Lake [City]. Gilbert wrote to Cobb and gave him my address. I wrote to Cobb the next Spring. Gilbert wrote to me I ~~thin~~ think in November after I returned home asking why I did not answer Cobbs letter. While I was writing an answer to Cobbs first letter my house caught ~~a~~ fire and burnt. Burnt up every thing I had and there was no insurance. Lost a thousand dollars. I was some time thinking the matter over before writing to Cobb as requested by Gilbert and during ~~[illegible]~~ that [p. 3] time my house was burnt. It had been a long time since those transactions and it was difficult to fix dates, But I have it now so that I can tell it right off. I have read the statements of Peter Ingersol and Samuel Lawrence—I noticed in that interview of your Brothers that some one Said that Tucker never called on Willard Chase for evidence. The reason was Chase had the paralisis and was not competent to give testimony—

q How came you to go over to Smiths to eat sugar?

a The Smiths were great sugar makers, they had a large bush and sugared

off ~~<almost>~~ every day or two at their house and they wanted me to come over and eat sugar. They made seven thousand lbs [pounds] one year and took the bounty in the County—$50.00. They were pretty good fellows in their way but were shiftless and in the money dig=ging business

q How did you fix the date that you saw Sidney Rigdon at Smiths previous to 1830?

a When I was talking with Gilbert I told him I would think the matter over and see if I could make affidavit and I fixed the time in my mind ~~by~~ by [p. 4] remembering that I had gone over there to eat sugar.

q Was Peter Ingersol and Samuel Lawrence acquainted with Sidney Rigdon?

a Yes. they were both acquainted with him in 1827. Sam Lawrence took Joe over into Pennsylvania and gave him a better education. I saw Rigdon in 1830 preach with the Bible in one hand and the Book of Mormon in the other, and <he> said the Bible is now fulfilled and done away and the Book of Mormon was to take its place.

q What kind of a woman was Joseph's wife.

a Joseph's wife was a pretty woman. Just as pretty a woman as I ever saw. When she come to the Smith's she was disappointed and used to come down to our house and ~~set~~ <sit> down and cry. Said she was deceived and got into a hard place.—When I was down to see my Brothers four years ago in a conversation with Gilbert when I first got there, it was then he said that he did not know that Sidney Rigdon was ever here ~~a~~ previous to 1830. He believed he was, but they had no evidence. He said they had been studying on it for 35 or 40 years but could not get the evidence. Said if they could only make that [p. 5] point the fraud would come out. He said he could come the nearest proving it by Abel Chase but he was not certain. When I got ready to come home (was there three weeks) Gilbert said he want=ed to see me before I left. He was work=ing on the Canal. He came to me as I was about to start home and it was then that I told him that I had thought the matter over and made up my mind that I could swear that I saw Rigdon in the neighborhood in the Spring of 1827. That is what he wanted I should write to Cobb. This conversation was in Palmyra in front of John Saunders store.

q Did you know any thing about Tucker?

a Yes. At the time Tucker was publishing his book I was at his house and he said that I had a better memory than he did and he wanted me to help him on his book and I did so. He promised to ~~send~~ <give> me a Book and he sent me this one when it was published.

q Did you know Martin Harris?

a Yes. He was called a squaretoed up=right man until after he got in with the Smiths [p. 6]

q What kind of a woman was his wife?

a She was large on self esteem. Her face was on the top of her head and her combativeness was large and her caution was not large enough to control them. She had an irri=table temper and was a hard piece to live with. Martin used to whale her.

Bill Smith told me once that he would never join the mormons but afterwards he did.

[s] Lorenzo Saunders

State of Michigan
ss
County of Hillsdale

On this Twenti[e]th day of September one thousand eight hundred and eighty four before me a Notary public in and for said County personally appeared the above named Lorenzo Saunders to me know[n] to be the person named in and ~~and~~ who executed the above instrument <and> who solemnly swears the same to be true to the best of his Knowledge & beleif

[s] W. B. [Worshrop?]
Notary Public
in and for Hillsdale County Mich

15.
LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOVEMBER 1884

Lorenzo Saunders, Interviewed by E. L. Kelley, 12 November 1884, 1-22, E. L. Kelley Papers, "Miscellany," RLDS Church Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Although Lorenzo Saunders was interviewed by William H. Kelley twice in September 1884, E. L. Kelley visited Saunders at his home near Reading, Michigan, on 12 November 1884 and conducted an additional interview. This document is written in ink on twenty-two legal-sized pages connected at the top with thread, except for the last two pages. A file notation, written in pencil on the outside of the group when folded, reads: "Nov 12—1884 / interview / Lorenzo Saunders."

No 1

Lorenzo Saunders interviewed,—
November, 12th 1884.

At the house of Lorenzo Saunders, in the Township of Reading, County of Hillsdale; 2 Miles East, & 1 1/2 miles South of Reading Village. Mr. Lorenzo Saunders was interviewed by Elder E. L. Kelley; Present Mr. Henry A. Fitzsimmons[1] of Reading village, & reported by Lorenzo Fay,[2] as Follows:—

"Your Brother came here one day with a little book; he wanted a statement. He said [that] he was a brother to

1. Henry A. Fitzsimmons, age twenty-four, is listed with his father Andrew in the 1880 census of Reading, Hillsdale County, Michigan, as a "student" (1880:31).

2. Lorenzo Fay, evidently a member of the RLDS church living at Carlton, Monroe County, Michigan, probably accompanied E. L. Kelley to Saunders's residence (on Fay, see *Saints' Herald* 22 [1875]: 84; 23 [1876]: 248-49; 24 [15 June 1877]: 181-82).

the debater. I supposed he was the brother to Clark Braden.[3] That is what I supposed; And I went on & give him a statement[4]; He did not want an affidavit. And he went away & he was gone two days; and he came back again, & he wanted to take the statement over again; he claimed his book was not large enough, so he explained it. I went on & give him a statement in that book. He took it that day & he went away[5]; ~~and~~ and I heard no more till two men came from Indianna; & they had the same statement that was given to them; and was drawn on paper.

(E. L. Kelley. —If you want to give your testimony, Mr. Fitzsimmons is <here> a disinterested party I never saw him until to day.) [p. 1]

Mr. Saunders) I think I would rather hear from Clark Braden, before I give any further testimony at all. I have not give[n] much of a statement at all to Braden; not yet. But he has written & he is waiting now for those fellows at the Bank to take it.

E. L. Kelly[.] If you want to take it before the Bank it will be just as well, and if you want an Attorney to act for Braden you can have one

Mr. S. I think I would rather not give any till I hear from <Clark> Braden.—Those two fellows from Indianna, are Mormons, & they denied it, & claimed they was not; that they belonged to the same church Braden did. I never asked their names; I was in a hurry.

E.L.K. If they belonged with our people, they were not Mormons, &c.

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3. See introduction to III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884. On Clark Braden (1831-1912), see introduction to III.H.7, JOHN H. GILBERT TO CLARK BRADEN, 27 FEB 1884.

4. See III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884.

5. See III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884.

Mr. S. (Exhibiting a paper)[6] Here is what Clark Braden sent me; for me to be on my guard.

I was born June 7—1811; which made me six years old when I first seen Sydney Rigdon[7] & heard him preach his first sermon in Palmyra.[8]

No, as I told your brother, I had nothing against the Smith family at all. Wm. Smith[9] lived there some time & I suppose he does now.

E.L.K. He lives in Iowa now, &c [p. 2]

Mr. S. He must begin to look old? I think he was in Reading here, about a year ago. I heard about it. He was in the Telephone office here, & the printing office; because I saw it published. If I had have known him to have been there I would like to have seen him. He & I used to hunt, & fish, & sport, while we was boys together. I am older than he Wm. Smith.—[10]

I tried to get your brother to go to the bank & give my statement; as I wanted to see Chapman; He is the man who Braden writes to & me.—Whether Joseph Smith was a Polygamist or not I am not able to say. I never knew anything about him after he come west. I think he was to my brothers once ~~of~~ or twice. I never saw any of the family after they left & came to Kirtland. Samuel Lawrence[11] was a very intimate acquaintance with Joseph Smith about the time Joseph Smith got married. Living as close as I did at that time there appeared something very mysterious about Mormonism, Though I never could go with the inst[it]ution

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6. It is unknown what paper Saunders comments on.

7. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

8. Saunders was almost sixteen, not six, when he believed he first saw Sidney Rigdon in Manchester in March 1827. He was nineteen when Sidney Rigdon preached at Palmyra's Young Men's Library Society in December 1830.

9. On William Smith (1811-93), see "Introduction to William Smith Collection."

10. William Smith, born on 13 March 1811, was therefore a little more than two months older than Lorenzo Saunders.

11. On Samuel Lawrence, see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, n. 147.

of the getting up of Mormonism, with what I knew. When this work was first brought forth by Joseph Smith it was not claimed to be a religious thing at all; it was a money making <thing>[12] [p. 3]

Mr. S. Martin Harris[13] when he fell out with his wife She could not agree with Mormonism & she said she was finding fault with him for wanting to make money.[14] Lord bless you; I was as well acquainted with Martin Harris's wife, as well as I was with my own wife. & know what course she took, & when she burned up those papers. I heard her say she burned the papers. she was pretty high on combativeness

E.L.K. That is a question we would like to know about? It never has been fully proven, yet.

Mr. S. Well sir, (some excited) she says she burned them up. And there was no mistake, but she did. They never was found; never came to light. I lived till I was 43 years old right there; & she never denied of burning the papers. He brought them home to proselyte her & she burned them.[15] He set her off 40 acres of land & I guess she lived there.[16] Martin was a good citizen. Martin was a man that would do just as he agreed with you. But, he was a great man for seeing spooks & believed in all these things. I never knew or heard Martin talk infidelity. They claimed that he was an infidel; but I never heard him talk infidelity on matters of Religion or anything of that. [p. 4]

Mr. S. He was a hard working man, & if he had staid where he al-

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12. That Joseph Smith's story initially followed money-digging lore and only later took on religious characteristics was also stated by Joseph Capron (III.A.3, JOSEPH CAPRON STATEMENT, 8 NOV 1833).

13. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris."

14. See III.A.7, LUCY HARRIS STATEMENT, 29 NOV 1833, 255.

15. Saunders here refers to the loss of about 116 pages of Book of Mormon manuscript in June/July 1828 (see discussion in III.L.16, BOOK OF MORMON PREFACE, 1829).

16. According to Thomas L. Cook, Lucy Harris lived "on her own farm which was on the Macedon Center road known as the Marvin Hill farm, how the John Coveney farm" (T. L. Cook 1930, 195, 206).

ready lived he would have been the richest man in that part of the country. But after Mormonism came up he seemed to talk of that and nothing else & he was running the streets & talking everything. And sometimes he would seem as though he was beside himself. There cant anybody say a word against Martin Harris. In 1828, my brother & I was at work in a harvest field. & Hiram Smith was to work with us; & I was going to show how the ideas run on at that time. He was whetting his scythe, & he turns round to my brother; (His name is Orlando[17] but we called him Orlin for to cut it short[)]. he says (H[yrum]. Smith) this is the last year I am going to Swing the Cradle. Why says he? I am going to take up this Mormonism, My brother Said: "Keep about your business as you have begun." his wifes name was Lucy.[18] He said: "I would not take a thousand dollars in that thing & not go into that thing. Joseph Smith my brother will be the richest man in the United states.["] So they claimed it under a money making system. But when Sydney Rygdon came forth with the [Mormon] Bible in one hand & King Jamse's [Bible] in the other hand, he connected them together [p. 5]

In 1830, I think it was the time he preached the first sermon in Palmyra, I was present the first time that he preached it. He took the two books up, & showing the connection; that King Jam[e]s's translation had nearly expired, had nearly lived out its time, & that this new dispensation was to come & take its place[19]

E.L.K. How soon after Joseph Smith claimed to have received the revelation did you see Rigdon?

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17. On Orlando Saunders (1803-89), see III.B.6, ORLANDO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 1881.

18. If this refers to Hyrum's wife, it is incorrect. Hyrum married Jerusha Barden in Manchester, New York, on 2 November 1826. Orlando Saunders married Belinda White in 1828.

19. In December 1830 Rigdon preached at Palmyra's Young Men's Library Society in the third story of Exchange Row (see also III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 9; III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP 1884, 5; III.D.9, LORENZO SAUNDERS STATEMENT, 21 JUL 1887; and III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 76-79).

M[r]. S. It was in the spring I went there to eat sugar. Samuel Lawrence went with me; There was 4 or 5 men making sugar; Their camp was right on the farm; They made several thousands pounds of sugar; You see there was a bounty in the state of New York & they was making a great deal of sugar & they had several boiling places & emploied some men; The men that was there stood down by the fence; There was Peter Ingersoll[20]; Peter's now dead. he died near Pontiac [Michigan]. His land joined the Smith farm on the north. Well he was at work there, & he came there & he was in this group with them, & Samuel Lawrence & there was the old man [Orin] Rockwell; father to Port[er] Rockwell. And one George Proper.[21] I do not know [p. 6] Whether he came to Kirtland or not. Della [Dolly] was baptized before they left.[22]

E. L. Kelley How did they happen to be all together there?

Mr. S. There was George Proper & Rockwell I supposed there were men to work for them in the sugar bush; I never asked any questions about his help. Samuel Lawrence came along & I went to the house. And there was a man better dressed than the rest come along up to smiths & Stood out door. I says, to Hiram Smith what well dressed man is that that stood out there? And he said, it was Sidney Rigdon.[23] This was in the time of making sugar along in march about the 10th or 15th, & they was in full blast & they used to invite us over to eat sugar. They made sugar every year.

E.L.K. How are you enabled to identify the time[?]

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20. On Peter Ingersoll (c. 1789-1867), see introduction to III.A.9, PETER INGERSOLL STATEMENT, 2 DEC 1833.

21. On George Proper, see III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, n. 14.

22. See also III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, n. 38.

23. During his previous interview with William H. Kelley, Saunders said that Samuel Harrison had told him that the well-dressed stranger was Sidney Rigdon (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 3-4; see also III.D.9, LORENZO SAUNDERS STATEMENT, 21 JUL 1887). It is possible that this stranger was the well-to-do Josiah Stowell or Joseph Knight, Sr.

Mr. S. Because, I know it was before Jo. claimed to have taken the plates from the hill Cummorah. And there was some two or three of us traveled that ground over, & we could not find a hole. There was a great raft of them digging for money.

E.L.K. Who was at the head?

Mr. S. Jo. Smith with his peep Stone. I never saw Jo. Smith digging[.] I tell you Willard Chase could not have [p. 7] given his evidence at that time; He was a true Wesleyan Preacher (Well now how is it?) He [Pomeroy Tucker] took that from How[e]'s Book, Because that was all the place he could give his evidence[24]

E.L.K. You see I have been up there and look after these Chases. His brother Able Chase says he never saw any digging there.

Mr. S. (Excited) I tell you, sir, I am one of them that saw digging there & I will Swear to it. I am one of them that went & tore the door down to the cave. My Father was in possession & he ordered us to break that door down & put the hole up.—[25]

Benjamin Tabor[26] owned the land at that time.[27] The

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24. This evidently refers to Pomeroy Tucker's use of Willard Chase's statement published in E. D. Howe's 1834 *Mormonism Unvailed*. Saunders explained to William H. Kelley that "Tucker never called on William [Willard] Chase for evidence. He had the poralisis and was not competent to give testimony" (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, n. 39). A "Miss Jayn[e]s" had told the Kelleys in 1881 that "I have heard Willard Chase say Tucker never even asked him for what he knew, and Chase said Tucker never called on him at all to find out what he knew" (III.B.9, HIRAM JACKWAY INTERVIEW, 1881).

25. Since Lorenzo Saunders's father, Enoch, died on 10 October 1825, the events Saunders describes in connection with the cave necessarily occurred before that date. See also III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 7-8.

26. Benjamin Tabor (or Taber), in his fifties, is listed in the 1830 Manchester, New York, census (1830:170). He was probably related to Saunders's wife Calista Taber, daughter of Franklin B. Taber (T. Cook 1930, 239).

27. The incomplete assessment records indicate Benjamin Tabor was taxed for 100 acres on Manchester Lot 2 in 1830 (Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York; assessments between 1823 and 1830 are missing). On 23 January 1834 Tabor deeded the land on Lot 2

cave was situated on the East side of the hill. It was a farm of a hundred acres; He had it on <on> an article & his article run out & he was likely to lose it. I went to Albany & I sold it to Amos Macy.[28] I never Saw young Jo. Smith there by the cave. I will tell you I take the evidence from what the old man said respecting that; The old man said: what: Jo. could see in his peep stone what there was in that cave. & the old man said that Joseph could see. [p. 8]

E.L.K. Was it not an account of the stories of there being treasure hidden there by old Spanish Buchaneers?

Mr. S. Well I will tell you they did dig; Willard Chase & Alvin, the one that died. Willard Chase told me about a place; He said he & alvin Smith went there to dig & there was

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to Lorenzo Saunders for $3,000 (Deeds, Liber 55, 368, Ontario County Records Center and Archives). County records also indicate that the previous owner of this land was Abner Cole (Pierce Granger [of Phelps], Deed to Abner Cole, 28 May 1816, Liber 36, 163-64, Ontario County Records Center and Archives). Extant Manchester assessment records indicate Cole paid taxes for land on Lot 2 for the years 1820, 1821, 1822, and 1823 (Ontario County Records Center and Archives). When Benjamin Tabor deeded the land to Lorenzo Saunders in 1834, the record stated that it was "the same lot formerly owned by Abner Cole and since became the property of the state of New York by foreclosure of a mortgage by said Cole to the state, and by the Commissioner of the land office of the state sold to the said Benjamin Tabor" (Deeds, Liber 55, 368). In 1824 Cole experienced great financial difficulty resulting in the seizure of several of his properties in Palmyra and Macedon, including his office lot on Palmyra's Main Street (for announcement of the seizure of Cole's land by "S[amuel]. Lawrence, late Sheriff," see *Wayne Sentinel,* 7 and 14 January 1824, 18 February 1824; and for announcement of the sale of Cole's lands, including several postponements, see *Wayne Sentinel,* 17 March 1824, 14 April 1824, 5, 12, and 19 May 1824, 14 July 1824, 8 August 1824). It was probably about this time that Cole also lost possession of Manchester Lot 2 and Tabor came into possession of it.

28. I have been unable to locate any land transaction between Lorenzo Saunders and an "Amos Macy" of Albany. It is possible that Saunders conflated and inaccurately remembered separate transactions. On 26 November 1836 Saunders obtained a letter of patent on a portion of Manchester Lot 2 from Governor William L. Marcy at Albany (Deeds, Liber 61, 376-77, Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York). On 28 January 1839 Saunders deeded a portion of this land to Amos Miner for $3,000 (Deeds, Liber 65, 177-78; see also T. Cook 1930, 238).

a chest there; and he said it was so large, & so wide (measuring with a cane) It was an iron chest. And he said they dug down & it only lay a little under the ground. I says how did this shovel become broken up like that? Willard Chase then told me; He says Alvin & I went down & found that chest.[29] Willard Chase claimed his sister Sally had a peep stone. The Lord bless you I have seen her peep stone a hundred times; It was a little bit of a stone & it was green & she would hold it before light.[30] After I left there, it was thirty years ago:—after I left there I can not tell you whether the peep stone was used or not[.] When men will come to me & tell me that men can pick stones out of this Earth [*sentence incomplete*]. as I told Jo. Smith when he dug one out of a well on Chases Farm in the Shape of a baby's foot. They dug that hole for money.[31] Chase's & Smiths altogether was digging it[.] [p. 9] I knew all about the stone; Edmund Chase[32] told me all about it, He lives here now, this side of Kalamazoo. He is a man older than I am[.] his name is Edmund Chase[.] I tell you when a man will ~~come~~ <tell> me that any one can get a stone, & see knowledge of futurity, I

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29. Since Alvin Smith died on 19 November 1823, the event Saunders describes necessarily occurred before that date. Peter Ingersoll also claimed that Alvin dug for money in 1822 or 1823 (III.A.9, PETER INGERSOLL STATEMENT, 2 DEC 1833, 233).

30. Benjamin Saunders described Sally Chase's stone as "bluish" (III.B.13, BENJAMIN SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, CIRCA SEP 1884, 29). Lucy Smith said it was green (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:69). It may have been a bluish-green colored stone.

31. All accounts seem to imply that the digging on the Chase property was intended as a water well (see III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 240-41; III.B.7, ABEL CHASE INTERVIEW, 1881; I.C.1, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., INTERVIEW WITH FAYETTE LAPHAM, 1830, 306; and III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 163; see also Quinn 1987, 40-41).

32. Edmund Chase (1803-?), son of Clark and Phebe Chase, was born at Manchester, New York (Reed 1902, 1:214). In 1830 and 1833 Chase was taxed for twenty-nine acres on Lot 1 near the Smiths' former residence (Manchester Assessment Records, Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York).

say that he is a liar & the truth is not in him. Steve Mungou[33] lost his pocket book in the road with some $50. in money in it. He went right to Sally Chase to get her to look & see where it was; She went & looked. He was drawing wood out of the woods. She said that pocket book lays right at the side of a log in the woods where you loaded that wood. It lays right at the side of the log well we went & hunted & raked the ground over where she said but could not find it. It past along & finally one night got a paper from Canadagua [Canandaigua, New York], & in it was that a pocket book was found & taken to an old Ontario Bank[.] Took it there & the owner could come & describe his book. And he went & found his pocket book at the bank. I lost [a] drag tooth out of my drag, dragging on my brothers premises there; I says: Sally, tell me where is that drag tooth? She told me "it lays in a log heap." She says I think it lays a little past you will find it [p. 10]

I went & hunted & hunted but could not find it there. I afterwards found it away over in one corner of the field. Well I was going to tell you about Jo. We went to Smiths one day, it was a rainy day; We went into the old mans shop, he was a cooper, and the old man had a shirt on it was the raggedest & dirtyest shirt, and all full of holes. & we got Jo. Smith to look & tell us what color our Girls hair was. well you see by & by some of them says go to Jo. says he Jo. come look into futurity & tell us how it is there? Jo. says I can not do that, I can not look into futurity I can not look into anything that is holy. The old man stood there and says: "I guess he can not look into my shirt then["][34]

E.L.K. Do you remember whether Joseph Smith's wife was there when you saw Rigdon?

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33. Probably Stephen Lemunion of Manchester, who advertised the loss (on 4 January 1827) of his "red Morocco Pocket Book, containing four promissory notes" totaling $113 and $1 in cash (*Wayne Sentinel,* 12 January 1827).

34. Saunders also told this story to William H. Kelley (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 2-3).

M[r]. S. I think she was.[35] she used to be frequently at our house but I cant tell certainly for Jo. went down & married her in Penn. she used to be an awful fine pretty girl; she was an intelegent woman. My oldest sister[36] & she used to be very intimate after Joseph was married. Right away after they was married she used to come to our house.[37] My Father died in 1825. [p. 11]

Speaking of the Smith family I gave them credit for everything except Mormonism; They were good neighbors; They were kind neighbors in sickness; & Hiram Smith in particular when my father died he was at our house all the time.[38] ~~He~~ <& I> had a brother died and he was as attentive then.[39] They was always ready to bestow anything. The old man was always telling yarns, he would go to turkey shoots & get tight & he would pretend to put spells on their guns & would tell them they could not shoot a turkey.[40] At the time the big hole was dug in the hill they was duped by one Walters[41] who pretended to be a conjurer, I heard Willard Chase say that he was duped. They could not be deceived

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35. Emma Smith denied seeing Rigdon before his visit to Fayette, New York, in December 1830 (see I.F.3, EMMA SMITH BIDAMON INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPH SMITH III, FEB 1879, 2:289).

36. Melissa Saunders, who married Willard Chase (T. Cook 1930, 236).

37. Joseph and Emma Smith were married in South Bainbridge, New York, on 18 January 1827. Soon after, they arrived in Manchester, New York, where they remained until their removal to Harmony, Pennsylvania, in December 1827 (see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 8, 9).

38. Orlando Saunders said that one of the Smiths was by his father's side until he died (III.B.6, ORLANDO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 1881). Benjamin Saunders mentioned especially Joseph Smith Sr.'s vigilance (III.B.13, BENJAMIN SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, CIRCA SEP 1884, 30). Enoch Saunders died on 10 October 1825.

39. Orson Saunders, brother of Lorenzo and Benjamin Saunders, died in 1825 (T. Cook 1930, 236).

40. See III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 2.

41. Believed to be Luman Walters (c. 1788-1860), who is more fully discussed in III.E.3, *PALMYRA REFLECTOR,* 1829-1831, n. 21. The "big hole" Saunders refers to was evidently the excavation of a cave on Benjamin Tabor's farm sometime before the death of Enoch Saunders in October 1825.

in it after he had gone through with a certain movements & ⊢⊣ charged them $7.[42] I seen the old man dig there day in and day out; He was close by. I used to go there & see them work. Joseph Smith never did work. They claim there in that book that Jo. Smith was a great worker.[43] he was a lazy dog, I tell you the truth. He never worked for my brother; because I was there all the time. & Jo. Smith never worked there, & Jo. Smith was a fellow that would not form any acquaintance with anybody [p. 12] much & if he did he would ~~get~~ have conflict. Them days people drank liquor everybody drank whiskey & the Smiths with the rest

E.L.K. By what train of circumstances, Mr. Saunders, can you tell the exact time, you first saw Sydney Rigdon there?

Mr. S At first I told him [John H. Gilbert] I could not remember exactly, but says I look here I will go back to my brother's house, (Orlan), & he will jog my memory & in this way I will be able to get at it. I talked with Able Chase & spoke to him about it. He finally says: you have got the book of Book of Mormon the first book in your brothers house. And I wanted it & tried to get the it I wanted to fetch it home with me but he said he wanted to keep it while he lived. And after taking the dates I had forgot what year the book was printed in till I got it[.] My brother could not remember anything. I says cant I tell you a circumstance? but his intelect seemed to be gone. I cited to him this case of Hiram Smith

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42. Abner Cole said Walters "was paid three dollars per day for his services by the money diggers in this neighborhood" (III.E.3, *PALMYRA REFLECTOR,* 1829-1831, under 28 February 1831, 109).

43. Saunders evidently refers to the 1 June 1881 issue of the *Saints' Herald,* which represented Orlando Saunders as saying: "They [the Smiths] all worked for me many a day; they were very good people; young Joe, (as we called him then), has worked for me, and he was a good worker; they all were" (III.B.6, ORLANDO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 1881). The Kelley notes, however, make no specific reference to Joseph Smith, Jr. (see III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 4). Orlando Saunders had also stated to Frederick G. Mather in 1880 that "the Smith family worked for his father and for himself" and were "good workers" (III.J.13, ORLANDO SAUNDERS, WILLIAM VAN CAMP, AND JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEWS WITH FREDERICK G. MATHER, JUL 1880, 198).

talking in the harvest field, & he says I do remember that now, but it was gone I would never have thought of it again. I says, it was in the spring of 1827 that I went there; He thought a minite & said: "I guess it was" [p. 13]

Says I you know father died in 1825 & says I he died in the fall & it was two years from that spring that I first saw Rigdon. Judging from the time that they made that large quantity of sugar in that year

E.L.K. Dont you think you might have been mistaken as to the date?

L.S. (Excited) No, sir, I am not mistaken I will tell you that if you are a Mormon I dont tolerate Mormonism, I say that I have nothing against that family at all: But say so far as Mormonism is concerned I do not tolerate it at all. The first that Mormonism was started there I investigated it from top to bottom & I found it out to be a humbug. I do not think Joseph Smith ever got any plates or ever had any plates. He got a glass box. I saw where the box was that was all. They claimed it was in that box. Now, if the plates was the thickness of tin the box could not hold one quarter of them.

E.L.K. you aided Tucker in getting out his book<?>

L.S. Why yes cited them to some dates. I was there & he had a sister that was very sick & died soon after that I came away & staied there 3 weeks, so I was into Tuckers out & in. So you see how far he had advanced in his book I could not tell. I never asked him one [p. 14] word about Sydney Rigdon being there. He wrote to Sidney Rigdon to try to get something out of him; It was generally said that the Mormons had shut his mouth by paying him a pension to keep him silent[.] We was coming from Palmyra I said I do not know Sidney Rigdon if that was sidney Rigdon down there I did not know him

E.L. In the house when you saw him afterwards & heard him preach could you identify <him?>

L.S. No, I could not I was not near enough to ~~identify~~ see his face before I heard him preach. Joseph Smith & this well dressed man stopped & talked with Peter Ingersoll. That was the time that Peter Ingersol[l] told Jo. Smith, he guessed he

had not got any plates the neighbors say it is all a humbug. Jo. Smith said: "what if it is now I have got the fools caught.["][44] This man was with him at the time & after we past on, I asked Peter Ingersol[l] who that man was? & he said, it was Rigdon. That was in 1827 late in the fall

E.L.K. So you saw Rigdon in 1827? A[nswer]. Yes sir. Is not it possible that it was in 1830? [p. 15]

Mr. L.S. No. because it was when Jo. Smith claimed to get the plates. Jo. Smith told the story but he told so many stories, it was a hard thing to get the fact in any way or shape. Now I can tell you what he told to our house respecting this revelation that he had in the very commencement before Alvin died, his brother; Sometime before this he claimed that he saw the Angel & that he was notified of these plates & all that & the time would be made known to him but it was not at that time made known to him but he must take his oldest brother & go <to> the spot & he could obtain them. Before that time his oldest brother died. Jo. Smith got that revelation a year or two before that. I do not know as I can tell what year Alvin died in[.] It was in the summer before Alvin died he told it at our house.[45] perhaps Mrs. Smith has got the date of Alvins death in her record.[46] After that Alvin died; Then Joseph said that he saw the angel again; The Angel told him he must go & get him a wife & then he could take his wife & go & get the plates.[47] & he pretended he

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44. Compare III.A.9, PETER INGERSOLL STATEMENT, 2 DEC 1833, 236.

45. Saunders also told William H. Kelley that Smith was instructed to bring his brother Alvin (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 9-10).

46. Lucy Smith incorrectly dated Alvin's death to 1824 (L. Smith 183, 40), whereas Alvin actually died on 19 November 1823 (III.L.8, ALVIN SMITH GRAVESTONE, 19 NOV 1823).

47. Saunders had previously told William H. Kelley that Smith believed Samuel Lawrence, rather than Emma, was the person who would help him get the plates (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 10). Other sources also name Emma (III.A.15, HENRY HARRIS STATEMENT, CIRCA 1833, 252; III.F.1, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH JOHN A. CLARK, 1827 & 1828; and IV.A.1,

must get a black horse or a mule to go & get the plates[.][48] We went there & we examined the hill [p. 16] all over where he claimed to got the plates & we could not find a place that was broke & there was no plates on the ground where the hill was not broke.[49] Robinson[50] said he tried many times to find the hole where he took them out, that is on the west hill it was ~~C~~ cleared off

E.L.K. He claimed he threw it into a brush heap there is trees on the top of the hill & timber on the South side.

L.S. Clear back opposite Jeremiah Sike's house was all cleared & cut off

E.L.K. Well if you do not want to give your evidence to day when Mr Braden comes notify me.

L.S. Let us see you commence a new debate the first part of next month. I want to see the statement I give your brother, that is coming out[.] I want to see how it comes out & see if it is altered[.][51]

JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 1).

48. In his interview with William H. Kelley, Saunders claimed that Smith borrowed his brother's black horse (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 11).

49. On other occasions, Saunders said he and others went to the hill on the Sunday following Smith's obtaining the plates (see III.D.9, LORENZO SAUNDERS STATEMENT, 21 JUL 1887; and III.J.20, LORENZO SAUNDERS TO THOMAS GREGG, 28 JAN 1885). David Whitmer said he talked with people in Manchester in 1828 who claimed to have seen the place in the hill where Smith took the plates from (VI.A.12, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH *KANSAS CITY JOURNAL,* 1 JUN 1881). However, Whitmer's informants may have been confused by a previous excavation on the northeast side of the hill mentioned by Saunders (III.J.20, LORENZO SAUNDERS TO THOMAS GREGG, 28 JAN 1885).

50. Anson Robinson, who inherited the property at the death of his father, Randall Robinson, but sold it to William T. Sampson in the late 1870s (T. Cook 1930, 246). One late source claimed that the stones that once formed the box had "rolled down and lay near the bottom of the hill" and were subsequently carried away (III.K.32, EDWARD STEVENSON REMINISCENCE, 1893, 13).

51. William H. Kelley never published the statement (presumably the final version of III.B.14, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 20 SEP

(Here he tells an obscene story)[52]

But I never believed about this other matter that Tucker put in the book they claimed about Wm. Stafford's Black Sheep.[53] I do not know William Stafford was a money digger[.] I have read the Book of Mormon pretty much through & read the Bible.

E.L.K. In your investigation you never thought they held to any other Saviour? [p. 17]

L.S. No, they never believed any such thing as that. Jo. Smiths revelations coming forth they could make up some new ones between there was a good deal of this stuff carried on[.] When I read the books against Mormonism in different news writing through out there are a a great many things that are not true. Now they had one up here to Mr. Cars; when I came to read this book, it is a forgery & it is a lie[.] I know enough in <of> the original of Mormonism. There is no such thing took place as that book tells about but they wanted to get up something. I do not want to tell no story about it that I do not ~~that~~ know. God knows I do not want to be guilty to the crime at all. Now Sidney Rigdon ~~Rig~~ was a very shrewd ingenious little devel [devil]; he was a good auctioneer; He was a painter by trade; He had a round Eye & he was a woman man. He was tall as you be, & rather thicker sot. I should think that Sidney Rigdon would weight as much as 165 or 170 pounds. His hair was not real black; his hair was curley & handsome on his head I see him in Canandaigua. He sold jewelry. I think it was on the day of training. He was there & sold jewelry at auction [p. 18]

I can not tell what year it was before Mormonism started. I was a boy 14 or 15 at that time

E.L.K. How do you <know> that was Sidney Rigdon?

1884), although he may have led Saunders to believe that it was his intention.

52. This evidently refers to the material on the last two pages (pp. 21-22), which were not attached with the other pages of the interview.

53. See III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 24-25, which is based on III.A.13, WILLIAM STAFFORD STATEMENT, 8 DEC 1833, 339-40.

L.S. Oh! Not Sidney Rigdon; I mean Brig[h]am Young.[54]

E.L.K. Well what kind of man was Sidney Rigdon?

L.S. He was quite a tall man; I should think he would weight 180 pounds when he preached in 1830. I saw Sidney Rigdon several times after that. He was a man, when he spoke he had a good flow of words. Could talk flippant right off, but when he brought out an expression very sharp or loud of peeped. Cobb at Utah wrote three letters to me. I did not send him an affidavit. I wrote him off a statement with what I could remember throughout. I then lived a mile south of here. And just as I got it ready, I had not sealed it up, my house took fire & burned up & everything I had; And no insurance. And that burned up the papers. I had no chance & I thought I was not doing justice not to reply to matters, so I did, and set down & wrote a short list of my misfortunes; & why I had replied to him before, but not anything of amount to him or anybody els[e].

E.L.[K.] You sent it to Cobb[?] A[nswer]. Yes sir.

Finis [p. 19]

[L.S.] Well I will tell you if Joseph Smith had Poly[g]amous wives as it is represented, as I saw in that book that Herbert [Hurlbut] had & that he wan<t>ed Sydney Rigdons oldest daughter down there in Kirtland, Sealed to him. I read it in his book.[55] Well now the amount of it is, if they will tell the truth, there is enough known whether he is in poly[g]amy or not. Well Wm. Smith knows whether he was or not.

E.L.K. And Wm. Smith says he was not. And Emma Smith says that he had not. She lived & died in Illinois. The present Joseph Smith was 14 years of age when his Father died & he never knew of his Father having but the one wife.

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54. On Brigham Young (1801-77), see introduction to III.K.19, BRIGHAM YOUNG ACCOUNTS, 1855 & 1857.

55. Probably a reference to Smith's reputed polygamous proposal to Rigdon's unmarried daughter Nancy mentioned in John C. Bennett, *The History of the Saints* (Boston: Leland & Whiting, 1842); for a discussion of this claim, see Van Wagoner 1989, 31-33.

L.S. Port[er] Rockwell is a hard case. There was a fellow that lived around here he was from Salt Lake [City]; I told him I was opposed to the whole transaction. He said: "it would not do for me to go to Salt Lake[."]

E.L.K. I want to know if you are going to be as fair to me as you are to Braden?

L.S. As far as that is concerned I want to see the Statement that I give your Brother. That is going to come out. I want to see how it comes out to see if it is altered. Well sir that day that that man came [p. 20] here & took these statements from me he gave me a recommend that he was a good honest fair man that he represented things fair & right. He staied over and eat dinner with us; & I give him Tuckers work. Says I now when you get this next book out I want you to sent it to me. & I give him Tucke[r]s book & he was speaking to me about Catherine Smith; About the revelation that Joseph had that there was going to be a new Messiah brought into the world, I heard it intimated that Catherine was in a family way. I know nothing about it. I do not know anything about it, says I, this is a very delicate matter to meddle with female characters.[56]

E.L.K. It is Catherine Saulbury now.

L.S. The time they lived there was 1830; She was quite a solid woman at that time. If you have read Tuckers book dont you know it is said that Martin Harris went through the streets claiming they had received a new [r]evelation there was coming out a new Jesus Christ Martin proclaimed one that would open the Eyes of the blind & cause the dum[b] to Speak.[57] I never heard him say so. & on the way to Kirtland that child was born & it was a dead one & it was a she Jesus. It was implicated there at the time it Catherine & I told your brother so. says I it is intimated around that

56. Compare III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 1; see also III.D.3, CHRISTOPHER M. STAFFORD STATEMENT, 23 MAR 1885.

57. See III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 81.

Sidney Rigdon was the origin of that [child][.] [p. 21] says I if you want to go into obscene matters I can tell somethings too. I went to Manchester at a Tavern. The old man Smith got tight there & Blue Brown. And they was always Contending to old Jo. that his Penis was 16 inches long. I told your brother that he climax was [once?][.] it was in a cold day & there their wives sat waiting outside for them & old Jo. ~~& al~~ measuring his drink. And then they had a square, & they measured; so old Jo. believed it was longer[.] so they pushed so hard they pushed it right through the seat of his breeches. I never believed about this there matter that Tucker put in the book, they claimed about the Wm Stafford black s[h]eep.

C.
Chester C. Thorne
COLLECTION

INTRODUCTION TO CHESTER C. THORNE COLLECTION

Chester C. Thorne was appointed minister of the First Presbyterian Church of Shortsville, New York, on 1 February 1873 (McIntosh 1876, 182). In April 1880 he received a letter from the Reverend Augustus Marsh (1834-1910)[1] of Cadillac, Michigan, requesting information about the character of the Joseph Smith family. Thorne's quick response included the statements of Danford Booth, Orin Reed, and William Bryant about their former neighbors the Smiths and Cowderys. Thorne's letter, published in the *Cadillac Weekly News* on 6 April 1880, evidently attracted considerable attention, for William H. Kelley, who was laboring as a missionary in the area, together with his attorney brother E. L. Kelley, responded by visiting the Palmyra/Manchester area and reinterviewing Thorne's witnesses. The published version of the Kelley interviews, which appeared in the *Saints' Herald* on 1 June 1881, challenged Thorne primarily by having his witnesses deny his ever having interviewed them. Thorne immediately collected notarized statements accusing the Kelleys of misrepresentation. On 27 July 1881 Thorne published his affidavits in the *Ontario County Times*.

This collection includes the following documents: *Cadillac* (MI) *Weekly News,* 6 April 1880; Orin and Amanda Reed Affidavits, 29 June 1881; Samantha Payne Affidavit, 29 June 1881; Danford Booth Affidavit, 1 July 1881; John H. Gilbert Affidavit, 12 July 1881; and *Ontario County Times,* 27 July 1881.

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1. Augustus Marsh was born in Aurora, New York. Ordained a Presbyterian minister in 1860, he served in the Synod of Michigan until 1905. He was pastor of the church at Cadillac from 1875 to 1883. He died at Grand Rapids, Michigan (*Minutes of the Seventy-sixth Annual Meeting of the Synod of Michigan,* 74-75).

1.
Cadillac (MI) *Weekly News*, 6 April 1880

Cadillac (MI) *Weekly News,* 6 April 1880, as quoted in *Ontario County Times* (Canandaigua, New York), 27 July 1881.

EDITORIAL NOTE

The original publication of the Reverend C. C. Thorne's letter in the *Cadillac Weekly News* on 6 April 1880 cannot be located at present. The extract reproduced below is taken from Thorne's response to the Kelleys published in the *Ontario County Times* on 27 July 1881, in which Thorne quoted a portion of his original letter to Marsh. Presently this is the most reliable source for the now lost original publication.[1]

In his *Ontario County Times* article, Thorne related the circumstances of his initial interviews with Danford Booth, William Bryant, and Orin Reed:

> A year ago last April, the pastor of the Presbyterian church of Cadillac, Mich., Rev. Augustus Marsh, wrote me, to the effect that there had been in their midst certain Mormon missionaries, preaching mightily, "endeavoring to make proselytes, and that some seemed quite disposed to accept their doctrines." Feeling himself called upon to expose the imposture, he wrote, and published in the "Cadillac Weekly News," one or two articles. This served to draw their fire fiercely upon him, and, to a greater degree, stimulate their endeavors. Having received, in a newspaper article, "the lie direct," and desiring that his statements in regard to the moral character of Joe Smith and his associates might be substantiated or refuted, authoritatively, and knowing that "the church of Latter Day Saints," originated not far from here, he wrote me requesting the testimony of old residents who had known them personally, or by reputation. Accordingly, I called on three different parties, and took down, verbatim, their statements, which I incorporated in a letter and forwarded to him at Cadillac. The letter was soon after published. ...

1. Cf. Braden and Kelley 1884, 119; Shook 1814, 36, for brief and inaccurate synopses of the statements in the *Cadillac Weekly News*.

"Yesterday I conversed with Mr. Wm. Bryant,[2] 85 years of age, a resident of our village. I asked him if he ever knew Joe Smith? He answered, 'yes, I used to see him frequently, knew him personally to some extent.' I then asked, 'what kind of a man was he?' He replied, 'a lazy drinking fellow, *loose in his habits everyway.*'

The next party with whom I conversed was Mr. Danford Booth.[3] He has been a resident here over 70 years. He 'knew nothing of the Smiths, except by reputation,' that was 'bad.' 'But,' he added, 'I was personally acquainted with Oliver [Lyman][4] Cowdery.' 'Well, what of him?' I asked. 'He was a low pettifogger,' he answered. 'Their (that is, the Smiths') cat's-paw to do their dirty work.' [Here I read him an article written by Mr. Marsh, on the 'Book of Mormon.'][5]

After reading your article in his hearing, I asked him what he thought of it? At once he replied, 'the statements are correct, they correspond exactly with what I have learned.'

Mr. Orrin Reed,[6] whom I visited this morning, was born and brought up not far from 'Mormon Hill.' When I inquired of him concerning the Smith family, he replied that he 'was acquainted with them but not very intimately. They were too low to associate with. It was thought there was no truth in them. They broke up families, and their aim was to get in where they could get property. Joe had no business in particular. He had frequent revelations.' Here Mr. Reed and his wife related the story of the sacrifice of a black sheep, in order to obtain a certain treasure which had been abstracted by the devil from its place of concealment beneath the soil of 'Mormon Hill.' The sheep having been procured from one of their neighbors." ...[7]

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2. On William Bryant (1795-?), see introduction to III.B.2, WILLIAM BRYANT INTERVIEW, 1881.

3. On Danford Booth (1804-?), see introduction to III.B.3, DANFORD BOOTH INTERVIEW, 1881.

4. Bracketed name supplied by Thorne.

5. Bracketed material in original.

6. On Orin Reed (1804-188?), see introduction to III.B.5, ORIN REED INTERVIEW, 1881.

7. At this point Thorne indicates that the "main points" of the sheep story were included in the original letter but not included in his excerpt for the *Ontario County Times.*

2.
ORIN AND AMANDA REED AFFIDAVITS, 29 JUNE 1881

Orin and Amanda Reed, Affidavits, 29 June 1881, Ontario County Clerk's Office, Canandaigua, New York. Published in *Ontario County Times,* 27 July 1881; and subsequently in *Cadillac* (MI) *Weekly News,* circa 1881, undated newspaper clipping, RLDS Church Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Orin Reed[1] and his wife Amanda told the Reverend C. C. Thorne in 1880 that the Smiths "were too low to associate with" and "related the story of the sacrifice of a black sheep, in order to obtain a certain treasure. ... The sheep having been procured from one of their neighbors" (III.C.1, *CADILLAC* [MI] *WEEKLY NEWS,* 6 APR 1880). When the Kelleys visited the Reeds in March 1881, they briefly recorded in their notebook: "Orin Reed Lived in time of Smiths. in Town of farmington. I know nothing about the Smiths only by hearsay" (III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 5). In the published version, William Kelley not only represented Reed as pleading ignorance concerning Joseph Smith's activities but also denying that an interview had taken place between himself and Thorne. On 29 June 1881, at the request of Thorne, the Reeds signed affidavits reaffirming what had been stated in the *Cadillac Weekly News.*

State of New York
County of Ontario | ss

Orrin Reed of the town of Manchester, in said County being duly affirmed, deposes and says,—that his age is 77 years,—that he was born in the town of Farmington, and about four miles from Mormon Hill (so called) that for forty Six years last past he has resided in said town of Manchester, and in the same school district in which Joseph Smith, and family—of

1. On Orin Reed (1804-188?), see introduction to III.B.5, ORIN REED INTERVIEW, 1881.

Mormon notoriety—resided and three fourths of a mile from Mormon Hill aforesaid. Deponent says that he has read the article published in the Cadillac <(Mich)> Weekly News of April 6, 1880, respecting "Cowdery and the Smith family" over the signature of C. C. Thorne,—that the matters set forth therein alleged to have been stated by deponent to said Thorne were so stated by deponent at the time and as mentioned in said published article.

[s] Orin Reed

Affirmed and Subscribed
to before me June 29, 1881

N. K. Cole[2]
Justice of the Peace

State of New York

ss

County of Ontario

Amanda Reed being duly affirmed deposes and says that she is the wife of Orin Reed, whose deposition appears above, that she was present and heard a conversation between her said husband and ~~said~~ <C. C.> Thorne—that the statements alleged to have <been> made by said Thorne as published in the Cadillac Mich Weekly News, over the signature of said Thorne were in fact so made, and that the language employed by her said husband was substantially as therein set forth.

[s] Amanda Reed

Affirmed & subscribed
to before me June 29, 1881

N. K. Cole
Justice of the Peace

2. N. K. Cole was "justice of sessions and justice of the peace" for Ontario County (Child 1867, 165).

3.
SAMANTHA PAYNE AFFIDAVIT, 29 JUNE 1881

Samantha Payne, Affidavit, 29 June 1881, Ontario County Clerk's Office, Canandaigua, New York. Published in *Ontario County Times,* 27 July 1881.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Samantha Payne (1808-?), daughter of William Stafford, was born in Manchester, New York. She is listed with her husband, David Payne (age fifty-five), and six of her children in the 1860 census of Manchester (1860:470). After the death of her husband, she lived with her son Cuyler W. Payne, with whom she is listed in the 1880 Manchester census (1880:306C). She was not interviewed by Thorne in 1880, nor by the Kelleys in 1881, but was perhaps included in Thorne's second gathering of evidence because she was a sister to the John Stafford whom the Kelleys interviewed at Rochester in 1881 (see III.B.11, JOHN STAFFORD INTERVIEW, 1881). See also III.J.19, SAMANTHA PAYNE STATEMENT, CIRCA 1884.

State of New York
Court of Ontario | ss

Samantha Payne of the Town of Manchester in said County being duly sworn, says that her age is 73 years, that she was born in said town and has resided here most of her life—that she Knew Joseph Smith Jr. "the founder of the Church of latter day Saints," <that she attended school with him for some time> that his general reputation in the neighborhood where he resided as obtained by the speech of his neighbors was bad,—that he was regarded by them as a worthless shiftless fellow, a bragg<a>docio and blackguard. Deponent further says that said Smith for a period of about seven years was more or less of the time engaged in digging for money—that he so dug upon many of the farms in the neighborhood as well as upon the farm on which she now resides,[1] and that some of the holes which he dug can now be seen—

1. According to an 1876 map of Manchester, "D[avid]. Payne" lived on Manchester Lot 9, situated on Stafford Road about two miles south of the Smiths' former residence (McIntosh 1876, 45).

[s] Samantha Payne

Sworn & Subscribed to
before me June 29[,] 1881

N. K. Cole[2]
Justice of the Peace

2. On N. K. Cole, see III.C.2, ORIN AND AMANDA REED AFFIDAVITS, 29 JUN 1881, n. 2.

4.
DANFORD BOOTH AFFIDAVIT, 1 JULY 1881

Danford Booth, Affidavit, 1 July 1881, Ontario County Clerk's Office, Canandaigua, New York. Published in *Ontario County Times,* 27 July 1881; and subsequently in *Cadillac* (MI) *Weekly News,* circa 1881, undated newspaper clipping, RLDS Church Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri.

EDITORIAL NOTE

In April 1880 Danford Booth[1] told the Reverend Thorne: "I was personally acquainted with Oliver [Lyman] Cowdery. ... He was a low pettifogger. ... Their (that is, the Smiths') cat's-paw to do their dirty work" (III.C.1, *CADILLAC* [MI] *WEEKLY NEWS,* 6 APR 1880). In March 1881 the Kelleys questioned Booth about Cowdery since he had evidently described Lyman Cowdery, a lawyer, not his brother Oliver, a school teacher. Booth was apparently unsure about which Cowdery he had known, and William Kelley represented Booth as denying he had had an interview with Thorne (III.B.3, DANFORD BOOTH INTERVIEW, 1881). At Thorne's request, Danford Booth made the following affidavit, which refutes Kelley's account of the March 1881 interview. In addition to procuring the present affidavit from Booth, Thorne gave the following response to the Kelleys in the *Ontario County Times* (27 July 1881):

> According to the evidence of their *own article,* I had an interview with Mr. Booth. They report, in "The Saints' Herald," that he said to them, that "he knew nothing of the Smiths," but that he *did* know one of the Cowderys; and when asked by them "concerning his character, replied he was "a low pettifogger;" the very language he used in my presence, and which I quoted in my letter to Mr. Marsh; and yet, it is denied point blank on the next page of the Herald, that he ever had an interview with me on the subject.

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1. On Danford Booth (1804-?), see introduction to III.B.3, DANFORD BOOTH INTERVIEW, 1881.

State of New York
ss
County of Ontario

Danford Booth of the town of Manchester in said County being duly affirmed deposes and says, that he has read the article published in the Cadillac Mich Weekly news of April 6, 1880, respecting "Cowdery and the Smith family" over the signature of ~~Rev.~~ C. C. Thorne, that the interview therein mentioned, between deponent and ~~deponent~~ <said Thorne>, did in fact take place, and <that> the matters set forth therein, alleged to have been stated by deponent to said Thorne were so stated by deponent.

Deponent further says that he has read a paper called the "Saints Herald" purporting to give an interview between one Wm H Kelley and another person and deponent, in which they state that deponent informed them that said Thorne and deponent never had an interview as alleged by said Thorne. Deponent says that he did not so inform them, and has no recollection of such question being asked him.

[s] D[anford]. Booth

Subscribed & affirmed
to before me July 1, 1881

N. K. Cole[2]
Justice of the Peace

2. On N. K. Cole, see III.C.2, ORIN AND AMANDA REED AFFIDAVITS, 29 JUN 1881, n. 2.

5.
JOHN H. GILBERT AFFIDAVIT, 12 JULY 1881

John H. Gilbert, Affidavit, Ontario County Clerk's Office, Canandaigua, New York. Published in *Ontario County Times,* 27 July 1881; and subsequently in *Cadillac* (MI) *Weekly News,* circa 1881, undated newspaper clipping, RLDS Church Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri.

EDITORIAL NOTE

John H. Gilbert[1] was not originally interviewed by the Reverend Thorne in 1880, but the Kelleys interviewed him in 1881 at Abel Chase's recommendation. When Gilbert saw the printed version of the interview (III.B.8, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1881), he accused William Kelley of misrepresentation and fabrication. The present affidavit, dated 12 July 1881, was made by Gilbert at Thorne's request. During his 1884 debate with Clark Braden, E. L. Kelley responded to Gilbert's complaint:

> Major Gilbert, if he made that affidavit, lied, and I know that he did. I am willing to face him in Palmyra, or any other place, and say that it is not true because I know his language was taken at the time. As far as the contradiction is concerned, I do not care anything about it. I wanted it to come before this audience. I knew what Gilbert had done when he found he was caught; and what Braden had to bring, but I wanted to show this audience how easy it was to run around and get affidavits and statements from persons and prove things, when you write them up yourself and have them signed (Braden and Kelley 1884, 123).

Kelley's suggestion that Thorne had written his own affidavits and signed them himself is unfounded. In fact, Gilbert's affidavit is written on paper different from the others and was mailed to Thorne at Shortsville as indicated by the envelope in Thorne's file at the Ontario County Clerk's Office. At the same debate Kelley also complained that "Major Gilbert does not state a single thing wherein he has been misrepresented" (ibid.). While this was true of the affidavit Gilbert prepared for Thorne, Gilbert had given

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1. On John H. Gilbert (1802-95), see "Introduction to John H. Gilbert Collection."

specific examples in other places of what he believed were misrepresentations in the Kelley interview (see III.H.5, JOHN H. GILBERT TO THOMAS GREGG, 19 JUN 1881; see also III.H.7, JOHN H. GILBERT TO CLARK BRADEN, 27 FEB 1884).

John H. Gilbert of Palmyra[,] Wayne county, N.Y. <being duly sworn> deposes and says, that in the article published in "The Saints' Herald," at Plano, Ill., June 1, 1881, purporting to give an interview with him on the subject of Mormonism &c signed by Wm H. Kelley, he is grossly misrepresented in almost every particular[.] words being put into his mouth that he never uttered, and the answers to questions he did give, totally at variance from the answer given by him, and as he believes, designedly;

[s] John H. Gilbert.

Sworn to before me
this 12th day of July 1881

M. C. Finley,[2]
Justice of the Peace

2. Mark C. Finley, in addition to being a justice of the peace, was trustee of schools and a Master Mason (McIntosh 1877, 144, 145, 146). Finley, at age thirty, is listed in the 1860 census of Palmyra, New York, as a "Lawyer" (1860:804).

6.
ONTARIO COUNTY (NY) *TIMES,* 27 JULY 1881

C. C. Thorne, "The Mormon Imposture. Rev. C. C. Thorne investigates the Character of Joe Smith," *Ontario County* (NY) *Times* 27 (27 July 1881): 3.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Both the original newspaper article and the original manuscript in C. C. Thorne's hand are located in "Miscellaneous Papers File" (1812-87), Ontario County Clerk's Office, Canandaigua, New York (filed under 30 November 1881). While not dealing directly with the Smith family, Thorne's article is important in assessing the 1881 Kelley interviews.

A year ago last April, the pastor of the Presbyterian church of Cadillac, Mich., Rev. Augustus Marsh,[1] wrote me, to the effect that there had been in their midst certain Mormon missionaries, preaching mightily, "endeavoring to make proselytes, and that some seemed quite disposed to accept their doctrines." Feeling himself called upon to expose the imposture, he wrote, and published in the "Cadillac Weekly News," one or two articles. This served to draw their fire fiercely upon him, and, to a greater degree, stimulate their endeavors. Having received, in a newspaper article, "the lie direct," and desiring that his statements in regard to the moral character of Joe Smith and his associates might be substantiated or refuted, authoritatively, and knowing that "the church of Latter Day Saints," originated not far from here, he wrote me requesting the testimony of old residents who had known them personally, or by reputation.

Accordingly, I called on three different parties, and took down, verbatim, their statements, which I incorporated in a letter and forwarded to him at Cadillac. The letter was soon after published. The portion which contained the testimony, mainly, read as follows. ...[2]

Nothing was heard in this vicinity after the publication of the letter,

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1. On Augustus Marsh (1834-1910), see "Introduction to Chester C. Thorne Collection," n. 1.

2. See III.C.1, *CADILLAC* (MI) *WEEKLY NEWS,* 6 APR 1880.

till last March. Sabbath morning, March the 6th, two Mormon emissaries[3] came to this village, calling first at the house of Wm. Bryant.[4] Without stating what or who they were, but expressing a desire to ascertain some "facts," in regard to the people known as Mormons, they commenced questioning him concerning Joe Smith, Cowdery, and others; both asking questions, one taking notes. After a few minutes, Mrs. Bryant, becoming suspicious, and fearing they might be entrapped in some way, began excusing her husband, saying among other things, that "his mind was somewhat impaired," on account of age, and "he ought not to say anything"; even saying, "he did not know anything." This, evidently was sufficient, in their estimation, to impair, if not set aside, his testimony. Leaving Mr. Bryant's, they called on Mr. Booth, Ezra Pierce and Orrin Reed of Manchester, and several others. At the beginning of their interview with Mr. Pierce[5] they were asked if they were Mormons. One of them replied: "I am a lawyer myself; this other gentleman can speak for himself. We don't propose to be anything, especially during this interview." They obtained but little information. Mr. Pierce was not disposed himself to talk freely. The 'facts' they were after, and which they claimed to have gleaned from sundry parties in this vicinity, Palmyra and Rochester, were embodied in a lengthy article in "The Saints' Herald," of June 1st, a paper published in Plano, Ill., in the interest of Mormonism, and copies of the same containing the article were mailed to all the families or parties whom they had interviewed. The article was signed, Wm. H. Kelley—"Elder in the Church of Latter Day Saints"—one of the two who had been engaged in missionary work at Cadillac.

In quoting from the article I will pass over the numerous references to myself, (they are not very complimentary) and cite barely one, with its associate asseverations. After referring to the communication in the "Cadillac News," the writer says, "Believing then that the whole story was a trumped up thing. I was determined to call on these gentlemen and ascertain whether this pious Rev. told the truth about what they said or not."[6]

The fact that I once interviewed Mr. Bryant upon the subject of Mormonism, is not denied; but, that I ever interviewed either Mr. Booth or Mr. Reed upon the subject, is denied *unequivocally*. I will quote from "The

3. William H. and E. L. Kelley.

4. See III.B.2, WILLIAM BRYANT INTERVIEW, 1881.

5. See III.B.4, EZRA PIERCE INTERVIEW, 1881.

6. See Kelley 1881, 162.

Saints' Herald," of June 1st, their own statements, questions, and answers. First, their conversation with Mr. Danford Booth: ...[7]

A few pages farther on, we come to their conversation with Mr. Reed, reported as follows: ...[8]

Mr. Reed was met at his barn (where he happened to be at the time, looking after his stock,) and not at his house. It is possible, that in his confusion and inability to recollect for the moment, he got me and my name confounded with another of the same name, who lived in Farmington several years ago. According to the evidence of their *own article,* I had an interview with Mr. Booth. They report, in "The Saints' Herald," that he said to them, that "he knew nothing of the Smiths," but that he *did* know one of the Cowderys; and when asked by them concerning his character, replied he was "a low pettifogger;" the very language he used in my presence, and which I quoted in my letter to Mr. Marsh; and yet, it is denied point blank on the next page of the Herald, that he ever had an interview with me on the subject.

According to their *own showing,* the testimony of Mr. Bryant against Joe Smith was exceedingly damaging; quoting him as saying it was believed Smith "lied about finding the plates" on which he claimed the Mormon Bible was written, and as saying that "they were all a kind of low, shiftless set." He did not mince his words, uttering half the truth and keeping back half. He spoke his mind to them voluntarily and emphatically; and yet, it is asserted that I made him say to me that Smith was "a lazy, drinking fellow; loose in his habits every way." The old man is able, without prompting, to speak for himself, and to compress considerable truth into one short sentence. He has not, by any means, lost his senses, nor is his memory of occurrences a generation past impaired. Events that transpired forty or fifty years ago he remembers as distinctly as the events of yesterday. That Joe Smith was "lazy" is notorious; that he "drank" is conceded, and to say that "everybody drank in those days" does not in the least invalidate the assertion that he drank, or make his practice of drinking a virtue. In regard to his "looseness," licentiousness, there is but one opinion, founded upon evidence incontrovertible. Licentiousness lies at the base of the established Mormon system. Throw out polygamy and the so-called church will be deprived of its main element of power over the lustful natures of men, and will speedily and irremediably topple and fall.

"Brighamites" and "Josephites" both claim Joe Smith as their founder.

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7. See III.B.3, DANFORD BOOTH INTERVIEW, 1881.
8. See III.B.5, ORIN REED INTERVIEW, 1881.

A stream, whether it flows in one channel, or divides, and follows two, partakes, of necessity, of the character of its source.

"The Saints' Herald" does not probably enjoy a very extensive circulation among Gentiles anywhere; and, for this reason, I thought, after reading the article, I would give it no attention whatever. But the leading question presenting itself—lifting up its front—is one of *veracity*. Who has told the truth? Leaving the article unanswered, I stand before many in this community, in which I live, as a fabricator of falsehood, before as many, at least, as may have read the article, and may feel disposed to regard it as wholly or in part reliable. Again, justice to Mr. Marsh, and to most of the parties interviewed, demands an answer. And finally, justice to *truth* demands an answer.

We invite attention to the affidavits appended,[9] and a comparison of the *reported* testimony of Mr. Booth and Mr. Reed, as taken from "The Saints' Herald," with their *sworn* testimony. Leaving readers to draw their own inferences, I subscribe myself,

Very respectfully,
C. C. THORNE.

Shortsville, N.Y., July 18, 1881.

9. Following Thorne's letter are the affidavits of Orin and Amanda Reed, Samantha Payne, Danford Booth, and John H. Gilbert.

D.

Arthur B. Deming

COLLECTION

INTRODUCTION TO ARTHUR B. DEMING COLLECTION

Arthur Buel Deming (1838-19??), born in Cincinnati, Ohio, was the son of Miner R. Deming, sheriff of Hancock County, Illinois, during the Mormon occupation of Nauvoo. He married Lamora B. Fox, daughter of the Reverend Charles A. Fox (Deming 1904, 443). As an ardent anti-Mormon, he acted as moderator and research consultant for Clark Braden during the latter's famous debate with E. L. Kelley in 1884 at Kirtland, Ohio. Visiting Painesville, Ohio, in 1885 and 1887, he solicited affidavits from persons in the area familiar with Mormon history in New York and Ohio. In January and April 1888, Deming published his affidavits in a periodical titled *Naked Truths About Mormonism,* printed in Oakland, California.

Deming was a traveling salesman representing companies in California and New York City. A printed handbill in the Deming Collection at the Chicago Historical Society, dated 1884, indicates that he sold goods for "W. L. Hulbert & Co." in San Francisco. When he arrived at Painesville in 1884 to participate in the Braden/Kelley debate and to collect documents, Deming carried a letter of introduction from his employer, William B. Dean, a New York City businessman who vouched for Deming's character as follows: "Mr. Deming has canvassed the country for me selling goods. I will say candidly I think him the best man in every respect I ever knew. I think it impossible to find a better. I speak of him as a salesman and a gentleman" (William B. Dean, Note, 7 November 1884, Arthur B. Deming Collection, Chicago Historical Society, Chicago, Illinois).

In his search for witnesses, Deming published in a local Ohio paper the following statement: "Soon all persons who are personally acquainted with the early history of Mormonism in and about Kirtland will be dead. It is of great importance to truth and our county that these persons immediately communicate such information to A. B. Deming, Painesville, O[hio]." (unidentified newspaper clipping attached to Arthur B. Deming's letter to A. C. Williams, 13 January 1885, Painesville, Ohio, A. C. Williams Papers, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio). By January 1885 Deming had collected numerous statements: "about 100 in all," as he later told A. C. Williams (ibid.). However, Deming announced in his *Naked Truths* that many of his affidavits were stolen from him in Chicago (January 1888, 2, 4). In all, Deming published nearly fifty statements.

Deming's Oakland-based paper was short-lived, publishing only two issues. Concerning the early demise of his paper, he told A. C. Williams: "I

published about 20 thousand copies of Naked Truths about Mormonism No. 1, and 12 thousand No. 2. The news companies re=fused to circulate them under various pretexts. A thousand or more were sold on the Central Pacific Railroad and in Salt Lake City. Finally the Central Pacific ordered their sale stopped. ... I have the stereotype plates there for both numbers, while I would be glad to sell, I owe over $350, borrowed money to publish them, the sale of the papers being stopped I lost heavily" (A. B. Deming to A. C. Williams, 25 January 1900, A. C. Williams Papers, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio). Deming apparently resided at Oakland until about 1898, afterwards moving to New York City (W. G. Schidt to A. C. Williams, 15 January 1900, A. C. Williams Papers, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio).

In New York City, Deming's mental state began to deteriorate. His rambling letters to A. C. Williams during this period reveal his increasing paranoia. "I have been followed and watched by Mormon detectives for years," he wrote in November 1900, and later the same month, "I believe Mormons and others are after me much of the time to destroy me" (Arthur B. Deming to A. C. Williams, 1 and 23 November 1900, A. C. Williams Papers, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio). Deming's diminished state led to rather bizarre behavior, as the following excerpt from an undated and unidentified newspaper clipping attests:

> As President Roosevelt was leaving the side entrance of the Church of the Holy Communion today after the [James King] Gracie funeral services, a commotion was created by A. B. Deming, a harmless crank, who vends in charcoal.[1]
>
> He passed a policeman and thrust a long paper into the president's hand.
>
> Deming was quickly arrested and taken away. ...
>
> Deming, who is an old man with white beard, shabby dress and carrying a large handbag, was pointed out to the police by Mrs. Roosevelt. ...
>
> The man afterward said he lived in Brooklyn, and that a vision had come to him from heaven calling upon him to warn [J. P.] Morgan and [Andrew] Carnegie of impending doom.
>
> When taken to police headquarters Deming told a rambling story. He said that he had tried before to interview the president to request him to

1. An undated newspaper clipping in the Deming Collection at the Chicago Historical Society indicates that Deming also sold patient medicine during his residence in San Francisco.

accept some of his medicated charcoal to send to Kaiser William of Germany to cure his throat trouble.

He was committed to the psychopathic ward at Bellevue. ... (A. C. Williams Papers, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio).

According to a report in the *New York Times,* Deming was charged with being a disorderly person and sent to Bellevue for five days' observation (28 November 1904). The details of his death are presently unknown. Deming's mental difficulties, which may have actually been a case of old-age schizophrenia, probably bears little on the affidavits he collected, since the witnesses themselves are responsible for their content. The affidavits he gathered from the residents of northern Ohio that deal with Mormon origins in New York follow in the order in which they were evidently taken.

1.
W. A. LILLIE STATEMENT, 7 MARCH 1885

Naked Truths About Mormonism (April 1888): 3.

EDITORIAL NOTE

W. A. Lillie (1815-?) was born in Trumbull County, Ohio. He is listed in the 1880 census of Willoughby, Lake County, Ohio, as a "Justice of the Peace" (1880:469; see also *History of Geauga and Lake Counties,* 1878, 256). In the present statement to Arthur B. Deming, Lillie relates the account of a "Mr. Pearne, of Chester [Geauga County, Ohio]," formerly of Palmyra, New York, given about 1834. The identity of Pearne is presently unknown and the content of his statement, as related by Lillie, is inaccurate and questionable.

I was born in Trumbull Co., Ohio, in 1815. Our family moved to Chester, the town adjoining Kirtland on the south, in 1822. About 1834 Mr. Pearne, of Chester, told me he used to live in the neighborhood of the Mormon Smith family in Palmyra, N.Y., and was well acquainted with all of them. He said they were a low family and of no account in the community. He told me the summer before Jo Smith, the Mormon prophet, first came to Ohio, he often saw Jo Smith and Rigdon together.[1] It was the first he knew of Rigdon, and it was before the "Book of Mormon" was published.[2] He saw Smith and Rigdon start together in a buggy for Ohio. Mr. Pearne

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1. Despite Lillie's claim, Joseph Smith was absent from the Palmyra/Manchester area from early April (when the church was organized in Manchester) to early October 1830 (when he and Emma visited the Smith family). Sidney Rigdon did not arrive in New York, where he first met Joseph Smith, until December 1830. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

2. The claim that Sidney Rigdon and Joseph Smith were together in Palmyra in the "summer" of 1830 conflicts with the claim that this was before publication of the Book of Mormon, which appeared in March 1830. Perhaps Pearne meant to describe the events of 1829, when Smith was in the Palmyra/Manchester area from late June to late September negotiating with Egbert B. Grandin for publishing the Book of Mormon.

knew Rigdon well after coming to Ohio and said he believed he (Rigdon) was at the bottom of Mormonism. My father borrowed the "Book of Mormon" and when he had finished reading it laughed and remarked Rigdon had done pretty well.

W. A. LILLIE.

Witnessed by:
A. B. DEMING.
THOMAS B. PAGE.[3]

Sworn to and subscribed in my presence at Willoughby, Lake County, Ohio, this 7th day of March, 1885.

A. P. BARBER.[4]
Justice of Peace.

3. This person remains unidentified.

4. A. P. Barber, at sixty one, is listed in the 1880 census of Willoughby, Lake County, Ohio, as an "Insurance agent." He was also one of the enumerators of the 1880 census.

2.
SYLVIA WALKER STATEMENT, 20 MARCH 1885

Naked Truths About Mormonism (April 1888): 1.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Sylvia Walker (1818-1902), daughter of Pardon and Ruth (Lameon) Butts, was born at Manchester, New York. Sylvia Walker's father was one of eleven signers of Philastus Hurlbut's general Manchester affidavit (see III.A.1, MANCHESTER RESIDENTS GROUP STATEMENT, 3 NOV 1833). She married Samuel Walker (1816-76) about 1846; they had three children. In 1852 the Walkers moved to Chester, Geauga County, Ohio, where Samuel farmed. Sylvia died at Russell, Geauga County, Ohio (U.S. Census, Geauga County, Ohio, 1860; Edgar Eugene Walker and Ida Butts, Marriage Record, Geauga County, Ohio, 6:349; Lovina Maria Phinney, Death Records, Geauga County, Ohio, 20 July 1914; Warren and Grosvenor 1985, 526).

I was born in Manchester, Ontario County, N.Y., Aug. 27, 1818, and lived there until 1852, when I came to Ohio. The Mormon Smith family lived in sight of my parents' house. I attended school to Oliver Cowdrey[1] with Carlos,[2] Sam,[3] Bill,[4] Catherine,[5] and Lucy Smith,[6] who were very poor

1. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

2. On Don Carlos Smith (1816-41), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 15.

3. On Samuel Harrison Smith (1808-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 13.

4. On William Smith (1811-93), see "Introduction to William Smith Collection."

5. On Katharine Smith (1813-1900), see "Introduction to Katharine Smith Collection."

6. On Lucy Smith (1821-82), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 18.

scholars. Jo,[7] Hyram[8] and Sophronia,[9] the other children, were older. I have been at their house. They were the lowest family I ever knew. They worked very little and had the reputation of stealing everything they could lay their hands on. Old Jo[10] was very intemperate.[11] When Jo told his neighbors about finding gold plates no one believed him nor paid any attention to it, he had humbugged them so much. Much of the time he claimed he was in Pennsylvania. I attended a Mormon meeting in old Jo Smith's log house. Martin Harris spoke and Darius Pearse[12] laughed at something he said. He reproved Pearse, who left the house, and when he was in the road began to denounce the Smith family and talked nearly one hour. The audience left the house and listened to him. He reviewed the character of them and said they stole six of his fat sheep.[13] His talk greatly pleased his neighbors. He was one of our best citizens. The Mormons said the price of the "Book of Mormon" was established at $1.75 by revelation. It did not sell well and they claimed to receive another to sell it at $1.25.[14] The people were amused that the Mormon Deity did not know what price to set upon the book. It was freely talked among the neighbors that Jo Smith said he had a revelation to go to Pennsylvania and get him a wife.[15] Jo claimed to receive a revelation

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7. On Joseph Smith, Jr. (1805-44), see "Introduction to Joseph Smith Collection."

8. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

9. On Sophronia Smith (1803-76), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 16.

10. On Joseph Smith, Sr. (1771-1840), see "Introduction to Joseph Smith, Sr., Collection."

11. On Joseph Smith Sr.'s drinking, see I.C.2, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., BLESSINGS, 1834, n. 11.

12. Darius Pierce was the son of justice Nathan Pierce. He is also mentioned in III.J.30, CHARLES W. BROWN ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1904; and III.J.38, CARLOS OSGOOD STATEMENT, 1932.

13. David Stafford accused Joseph Smith, Sr., of sheep stealing (III.A.12, DAVID STAFFORD STATEMENT, 5 DEC 1833, 249-50), and William Stafford claimed Joseph Smith, Jr., tricked him out of one of his sheep (III.A.13, WILLIAM STAFFORD STATEMENT, 8 DEC 1833, 239). William Smith, however, denied that his family was guilty of sheep stealing (I.D.2, WILLIAM SMITH NOTES, CIRCA 1875, 5-6).

14. See III.A.15, HENRY HARRIS STATEMENT, CIRCA 1833.

15. This is perhaps a reference to the instruction Smith received during his second visit to the hill in 1824. Lorenzo Saunders, for example, said that the angel told Smith that "he must go get him a wife & then he could take his wife & go and get the plates" (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS

to dig forty feet into a hill about two miles north of where he pretended to find the gold plates of the "Book of Mormon," where he would find a cave that contained gold furniture, chairs and table. The Mormons dug into the hill horizontally over forty feet without finding any cave. The boys troubled them so they placed a door with lock at the entrance. The boys placed brush against it and destroyed it with fire. The Mormons abandoned it. I heard our neighbors say probably Jo Smith dug his fat sheep and barrels of flour out of it.[16]

[Signed] MRS. SYLVIA WALKER.

Witnessed by:
MRS. ALBERT PHINNEY[17]
(Daughter).
MISS LULA PHINNEY[18]
(Granddaughter).

Chester, Ohio, March 20, 1885.

INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 16; see also III.A.15, HENRY HARRIS STATEMENT, CIRCA 1833, 252; III.F.1, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH JOHN A. CLARK, 1827 & 1828; and IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 1).

16. This account is very similar to Lorenzo Saunders's testimony of the Smiths' digging a cave on his father's property before 1825. Saunders said Joseph Jr. "could look in his peep stone and see a man sitting in a gold chair. Old Joe said he was king i.e. the man in the chair; a king of one of the ... <tribes> who was shut in there in the time of one of their big battles. ... Don't know as there was ever anything in the cave. ... The cave had a door to it. We tore it off and sunk it in a pit of water where they got dirt to cover a cole pit" (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 6-7; see also III.E.3, *PALMYRA REFLECTOR,* 1829-1831, under 14 February 1831, 102).

17. Lovina Walker Phinney (1847-1914), oldest child of Sylvia and Samuel Walker, married Albert P. Phinney (1841-1938) in 1867 (U.S. Census, Chester, Geauga County, Ohio, 1900; Warren and Grosvenor 1985, 161).

18. Lula B. Phinney (1871-1966), daughter of Albert and Lovina Phinney and granddaughter of Sylvia Walker (U.S. Census, Chester, Geauga County, Ohio, 1900; Warren and Grosvenor 1985, 161).

3.
CHRISTOPHER M. STAFFORD STATEMENT, 23 MARCH 1885

Naked Truths About Mormonism (April 1888): 1.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Christopher M. Stafford (1808-92), older brother of Cornelius R. Stafford and son of Jonathan (brother of William Stafford) and Phebe Stafford, was born in Manchester, New York. He married Emily Rockwell (1810-83), sister of Orrin Porter Rockwell, on 7 January 1830. In late 1831 Stafford and his wife moved to Ohio and settled on a sixty-three-acre farm northeast of Auburn, Geauga County. He is listed in the 1860 and 1880 censuses as a farmer (U.S. Census, Auburn, Geauga County, Ohio, 1860:878; 1880:13). The Staffords raised seven children and attended the Free-will Baptist Church. Stafford died at Auburn, Ohio (Warren and Grosvenor 1985, 9; *Biographical History of Northeastern Ohio,* 1893, 684; *Pioneer and General History of Geauga County,* 1880, 188, 205; Marriage Record, Nathan Pierce Docket Book, Manchester Township Office, Clifton Springs, New York).

I was born in Manchester, Ontario Co., N.Y., May 26, 1808. I well remember about 1820, when old Jo Smith and family settled on one hundred acres one mile north of our house.[1] The north line of his farm was the boundary line between Manchester, Ontario Co., and Palmyra, Wayne Co., N.Y. The village of Palmyra was about two miles north of Jo's house. Old Jo[2] claimed to be a cooper but worked very little at anything. He was intemperate.[3] Hyrum[4] worked at cooperage.

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1. About 1820 the Smiths moved to a little log cabin on Stafford Road just north of the Palmyra/Manchester township line (III.L.2, PALMYRA [NY] HIGHWAY SURVEY, 13 JUN 1820). Shortly after July 1820, the Smiths articled for their Manchester land (see III.L.4, SMITH MANCHESTER [NY] LAND RECORDS, 1820-1830).

2. On Joseph Smith, Sr. (1771-1840), see "Introduction to Joseph Smith, Sr., Collection."

3. On Joseph Smith Sr.'s drinking, see I.C.2, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., BLESSINGS, 1834, n. 11.

4. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

Alvin[5] was the oldest son and worked the farm and was the stay of the family. He died a few years after they came.[6] I exchanged work with Jo but more with his brother [Samuel] Harrison,[7] who was a good, industrous boy. I did not enjoy my meals at the Smith's, they were so filthy. Jo got drunk while we were haying for my uncle, Wm. Stafford[8]; also at a husking at our house, and stayed overnight. I have often seen him drunk. Jo was the laziest one of the family, and a dull scholar, as were all the Smiths except Harrison and Catherine.[9] I attended school with them, also Bill[10] and Carlos.[11]

Oliver Cowdery[12] taught one winter. Catherine's reputation for virtue was not good.[13] Jo claimed he could tell where money was buried, with a witch hazel consisting of a forked stick of hazel. He held it one fork in each hand and claimed the upper end was attracted by the money.[14] I heard my stepfather, Robert Orr,[15] say he had been digging for money one night. Some

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5. On Alvin Smith (1798-1823), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 10.

6. Alvin died on 19 November 1823.

7. On Samuel Harrison Smith (1808-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 13.

8. On William Stafford (c. 1786-1863), see introduction to III.A.13, WILLIAM STAFFORD STATEMENT, 8 DEC 1833. On Joseph Smith Jr.'s drinking, see III.A.2, BARTON STAFFORD STATEMENT, 3 NOV 1833, n. 4. Regarding the instance of Smith's drinking while haying at William Stafford's, compare III.A.2, BARTON STAFFORD STATEMENT, 3 NOV 1833; and III.D.8, S. F. ANDERICK STATEMENT, 24 JUN 1887.

9. On Katharine Smith (1813-1900), see "Introduction to Katharine Smith Collection."

10. On William Smith (1811-93), see "Introduction to William Smith Collection."

11. On Don Carlos Smith (1816-41), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 15.

12. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

13. This rumor was also stated by Lorenzo Saunders (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 1; III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 21).

14. While there is testimony of Smith's use of a divining rod (Quinn 1987, 36), it is unusual that Stafford did not mention Smith's seer stone.

15. Robert Orr was described by Pomeroy Tucker as an early believer in Joseph Smith's "money-digging or golden bible finding" (III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 39). He married Phebe Stafford, Jonathan Stafford's widow, on 17 September 1822 (Death Records, On-

of my neighbors also said they were digging for money nights. My mother-in-law, Mrs. [Sarah Witt] Rockwell, said that Prophet Jo Smith told her there was money buried in the ground and she spent considerable time digging in various places for it. I never knew of her finding any. Jo Smith told me there was a peep-stone for me and many others if we could only find them. Jo claimed to have revelations and tell fortunes. He told mine by looking in the palm of my hand and said among other things that I would not live to be very old.[16]

When he claimed to find gold plates of the Mormon Bible no attention was paid to them or him by his neighbors. Some time after Jo had men dig on a tunnel forty or fifty feet long on a hill about two miles north of where he claimed to find the plates. I have been in it.[17] Some people surmised it was intended for counterfeiting. Jo was away much of the time summers. He claimed to have a revelation that Manchester, N.Y., was to be destroyed and all the Mormons must leave for Kirkland, O.[18] Orrin Rockwell and wife wanted my wife [Emily Rockwell], their daughter, to go to Missouri. We came to Auburn, Geauga Co., O., Dec. 2, 1831, and have since resided here.

Orrin Porter Rockwell[19] made us a visit on a fine horse (I doubt if he owned it). Soon after Governor Boggs was shot. Prophet Jo told Mrs. Risley,[20] of Manchester, a cripple, he could heal her and she joined the Mormons. Jo failed to heal her and she never walked.

[Signed] C. M. STAFFORD.

Witnessed by:
A. B. DEMING.

Auburn, March 23, 1885.

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tario County Historical Society, Canandaigua, New York).

16. Anna Ruth Eaton said that Lucy Smith practiced palmistry (III.J.14, ANNA RUTH EATON STATEMENT, 1881).

17. Evidently the same cave described by Lorenzo Saunders (see III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 8). The suspicion that the cave was a cover for counterfeiting was also stated by Ezra Pierce (III.B.4, EZRA PIERCE STATEMENT, 1881).

18. Cf. LDS D&C 38 and 42.

19. On Orrin Porter Rockwell (1813-78), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 121.

20. Possibly "Widow Sally Risley" mentioned in III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 39.

4.
CORNELIUS R. STAFFORD STATEMENT, (23) MARCH 1885

Naked Truths About Mormonism (January 1888): 3.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Cornelius R. Stafford (1813-?), son of Jonathan and Phebe Stafford and younger brother of Christopher M. Stafford, was born at Manchester, New York. He is listed in the 1860 census as a merchant, and in the 1880 census as a farmer (U.S. Census, Auburn, Geauga County, Ohio, 1860:881; 1880:12). In 1837 he brought his mother, Phebe Orr (1781-1869), to Auburn, Ohio. He married Phebe F. Whitney in 1839. An 1880 county history states that "Cornelius now resides on the farm where he first settled. He built a nice house and barns some years since, and he and his wife are enjoying the benefits of their industry and perseverance in their declining years" (*Pioneer and General History of Geauga County,* 1880, 205). He probably died in Auburn, Geauga County, Ohio, although a grave marker cannot be found (Warren and Grosvenor 1985, 40).

The exact date of the present statement is not given, but Deming probably took the statements of Christopher and Cornelius Stafford on the same day since both men lived in Auburn, Ohio.

I was born in Manchester, New York, Feb. 4, 1813. Our school district was called the Stafford District because of sixty scholars enrolled, forty were Staffords. The road on which they lived is now called Stafford Street. The Mormon Smith family lived near our house. I was well acquainted with them, and attended school with the younger children. There was much digging for money on our farm and about the neighborhood. I saw Uncle John and Cousin Joshua Stafford[1] dig a hole twenty feet long, eight broad and seven deep. They claimed that they were digging for money but were not successful in finding any. Jo Smith kept it up after our neighbors had abandoned it. A year or two after Jo claimed to find the plates of the "Book of Mormon." He had men dig a tunnel near fifty

1. On Joshua Stafford (1798-1876), see III.A.4, JOSHUA STAFFORD STATEMENT, 15 NOV 1833.

feet long in a hill about two miles north of the hill where he claimed to find the plates.[2] I tried to look into a peep-stone in my hat in a dark room; I saw nothing, some claimed they could. I saw old Jo Smith,[3] his wife [Lucy Smith][4] and Mrs. [Sarah Witt] Rockwell[5] baptized by prophet Jo Smith.[6] I have seen Jo in drunken fights[7]; father and son were frequently drunk. I remember when a man (Hurlbut)[8] came to our school house and took statements about the bad character of the Mormon Smith family, and saw them swear to them. Jo Smith, the prophet, told my uncle, William Stafford,[9] he wanted a fat, black sheep. He said he wanted to cut its throat and make it walk in a circle three times around and it would prevent a pot of money from leaving. Jo's family ate the sheep; he duped many people in similar ways.[10] He claimed to receive revelations from the Lord. The Smiths stole six hogs-heads from us; everything missing was claimed by our neighbors to be in possession of the Smiths. I would make oaths to my statement were not the Justice sick.

[Signed.] C. R. STAFFORD.

Witnessed by:
R. M. STAFFORD (Son),[11]

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2. Evidently the cave described by Lorenzo Saunders (see III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 8).

3. On Joseph Smith, Sr. (1771-1840), see "Introduction to Joseph Smith, Sr., Collection."

4. On Lucy Smith (1775-1856), see "Introduction to Lucy Smith Collection."

5. On Sarah Witt Rockwell (1785-?), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 90.

6. According to Joseph Smith's History, Oliver Cowdery baptized Joseph Smith, Sr., Martin Harris, Lucy Smith, and Sarah Rockwell on 6 April 1830 (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 38). But the History Draft includes a note stating that Lucy Smith and Sarah Rockwell were baptized one or two days later (DRAFT:9-10).

7. On Joseph Smith's drinking, see III.A.2, BARTON STAFFORD STATEMENT, 3 NOV 1833, n. 4.

8. On Philastus Hurlbut (1809-83), see "Introduction to Philastus Hurlbut."

9. On William Stafford (c. 1786-1863), see introduction to III.A.13, WILLIAM STAFFORD STATEMENT, 8 DEC 1833.

10. See III.A.13, WILLIAM STAFFORD STATEMENT, 8 DEC 1833, 239; see also R. I. Anderson 1990, 60, n. 26.

11. Royal M. Stafford, son of Cornelius Stafford, was married and living in Astabula, Ohio, by 1880 (*Pioneer and General History of Geauga County,*

INA M. RICHARDS (G[rand]. daughter).[12]

Auburn, O., March, 1885.

1880, 205).

12. Ina M. Richards was evidently the daughter of Olive S. (Stafford) Richards (b. c. 1842), Stafford's only daughter, and Jacob A. Richards (b. c. 1844) (*Pioneer and General History of Geauga County,* 1880, 164, 205). The 1870 Federal Census of Hambden, Geauga County, Ohio, lists Ina Richards, age two, with her parents (1870:152).

5.
CAROLINE ROCKWELL SMITH STATEMENT, 25 MARCH 1885

Naked Truths About Mormonism (April 1888): 1.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Deming attributes this statement to "Mrs. M. C. R. Smith," undoubtedly Caroline Rockwell (1812-87), sister of Orrin Porter Rockwell (Schindler 1966, 15; R. L. Anderson 1970, 300, 303; Bushman 1984, 212, n. 89). She was born in Belchertown, Massachusetts, was baptized by David Whitmer in Fayette, New York, married Horton Smith (1811-65), a well-to-do farmer in Hambden, Geauga County, Ohio, in 1834, and subsequently parented six children. She died at Hambden (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 42; U.S. Census, Hambden, Geauga County, Ohio, 1850 and 1860; Warren and Grosvenor 1985, 285; Jessee 1989, 510).

I was born in Belchertown, Mass., May 1, 1812. When I was five or six years old my parents moved to Manchester, N.Y., one mile from the Mormon Smith family, and I attended school with their children. There was considerable digging for money in our neighborhood by men, women and children.[1] I never knew of their finding any. I saw a large hole dug on Nathaniel Smith's farm,[2] which was sandy. I saw Joshua Stafford's[3] peepstone which looked like white marble and had a hole through the center. Sallie Chase, a Methodist, had one and people would go for her to find lost and hidden or stolen things.[4] My mother [Sarah Witt Rockwell] was one of

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1. Caroline's brother Orrin Porter Rockwell dug for money in the Manchester, New York, area (see Quinn 1987, 49).

2. Nathaniel Smith, between twenty-six and forty-five years old, is listed in the 1820 census of Farmington, Ontario County, New York, only three names below Joseph Smith, Sr. (1820:318).

3. On Joshua Stafford (1798-1876), see introduction to III.A.4, JOSHUA STAFFORD STATEMENT, 15 NOV 1833.

4. See I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:69; III.B.13, BENJAMIN SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, CIRCA SEP 1884, 29-30; III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 9; III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 7, 16; III.B.4, EZRA PIERCE INTERVIEW, 1881, 165; III.B.7, ABEL CHASE INTERVIEW, 1881, 165;

the first Mormon converts. Father [Orin Rockwell][5] copied the "Book of Mormon" for the printer, or part of it.[6] I heard Martin Harris[7] say that the first part of the "Book of Mormon" was stolen and that he thought his wife took it and it was not printed in the "Book of Mormon." Father joined the Mormons after my parents went West. Catherine Smith,[8] sister of the prophet, showed me in their house a chest with lock where the plates were kept, but they feared they would be stolen, and then she took up four bricks in the hearth and said they had been buried there.[9] Jo Smith's mother doctored many persons in Palmyra. My sister, with whom mother died in California, was opposed to her being a Mormon.[10] I hope sometime it will be known whether Mormonism is true or not. My brother, Orrin Porter Rockwell,[11] made me a visit in 1844 or '45. When ten years old he broke his leg and a young doctor in Palmyra set it so one leg was shorter than the other and it always troubled him so he could not work at farming.

[Signed] MRS. M. C. R. SMITH.

III.B.11, JOHN STAFFORD INTERVIEW, 1881, 167; III.D.8, S. F. ANDERICK STATEMENT, 24 JUN 1887.

5. Orin Rockwell (1784-1839) married Sarah (Sally) Witt at Belchertown, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, in 1809. He moved to Manchester, New York, sometime after the birth of his son Orrin in 1813. According to the present source, he was baptized after the family had moved to Ohio in the spring of 1831. He died on 22 September 1839 (see Rockwell Family Group Record, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah).

6. With the assistance of Dean C. Jessee, Royal Skousen has identified on the printer's manuscript, now in possession of the RLDS Church, the handwriting of Oliver Cowdery, Hyrum Smith, and possibly Martin Harris (Skousen 1992; Skousen 1993).

7. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

8. On Katharine Smith (1813-1900), see "Introduction to Katharine Smith Collection."

9. For other accounts of the plates being hidden under the Smiths' hearth, see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:67-68; III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 166-67; III.K.12, MARY A. NOBLE AUTOBIOGRAPHY, CIRCA 1834-1836; and IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 3.

10. Probably Electa Rockwell, who married Samuel M. Ousley in 1837 and moved to Gilroy, Santa Clara County, California, where she died in 1900 (Jessee 1989, 510).

11. On Orrin Porter Rockwell (1813-1878), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 121.

Witnessed by:
A. B. DEMING,
B. N. SHAW.[12]

Ham[b]den, Ohio, March 25, 1885.

12. This person remains unidentified.

6.
ISAAC BUTTS STATEMENT, CIRCA MARCH 1885

Naked Truths About Mormonism (January 1888): 2.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Isaac Butts (1807-88) was born at Palmyra, New York. In 1818 he moved to Ohio, but returned to Palmyra to live on two unspecified occasions. He married Cynthia Woods (1811-87) about 1834 and farmed in Newbury, Geauga County, Ohio. He died at Auburn, Ohio (U.S. Census, Newbury, Geauga County, Ohio, 1880; Warren and Grosvenor 1985, 5).

The present statement is undated, but was probably taken by Deming about March 1885 when he interviewed others in Geauga County. The following note accompanies Butts's statement: "Original sworn to, but missing in Chicago." Because Butts's original, notarized statement was among the papers stolen from Deming during a visit to Chicago in December 1885, the published version was taken from a copy Deming had retained (*Naked Truths About Mormonism* 1 [January 1888]: 4).

I was born in Palmyra, N.Y., near where old Jo Smith settled, January 4, 1807. I attended school with Prophet Jo. His father taught me to mow. I worked with old and young Jo at farming. I have frequently seen old Jo drunk.[1] Young Jo had a forked witch-hazel rod with which he claimed he could locate buried money or hidden things. Later he had a peep-stone which he put into his hat and looked into it. I have seen both.[2] Joshua Stafford,[3] a good citizen, told me that young Jo Smith and himself dug for money in his orchard and elsewhere nights. All the money digging was done nights. I saw the holes in the orchard which were four or five feet square and three or four

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1. On Joseph Smith Sr.'s drinking, see I.C.2, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., BLESSINGS, 1834, n. 11.

2. Concerning Joseph Smith's use of both a divining rod and seer stone, see Quinn 1987, 36.

3. On Joshua Stafford (1798-1876), see introduction to III.A.4, JOSHUA STAFFORD STATEMENT, 15 NOV 1833.

feet deep.[4] Jo and others dug much about Palmyra and Manchester. I have seen many of the holes. The first thing he claimed to find was gold plates of the "Book of Mormon," which he kept in a pillowcase and would let people lift, but not see. I came to Ohio in 1818, and became acquainted with Sydney Rigdon[5] in 1820. He preached my brother's funeral sermon in Auburn, O., in May, 1822. I returned to Palmyra twice and resided there about two years each time. Many persons whom I knew in New York joined the Mormons and came to Kirtland. They told me they saw Sidney Rigdon much with Jo Smith before they became Mormons, but did not know who he was until they came to Kirtland.

[Signed.] ISAAC BUTTS.

South Newbury, Geauga Co, O.

4. These holes were evidently on Joshua Stafford's land, which was situated on Stafford Road about two miles south of the Smiths on Manchester Lots 5 (until 1821), 7, and 9 (Manchester Assessment Records, 1820-1823, and 1830, Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York).

5. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

7.
JOSEPH ROGERS STATEMENT, 16 MAY 1887

Naked Truths About Mormonism (April 1888): 1.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Joseph Rogers (1805-?) was born in Western, Oneida County, New York. When Rogers was about ten, his parents moved to Phelpstown (less than ten miles from the Smith family's residence in Manchester). In 1842 he moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan, and later (perhaps in 1852) to Los Gatos, California. Deming gives the following additional information about Rogers: "Mr. Rogers formerly lived at Ann Arbor, Michigan. Judge White, his son-in-law, is attorney for the Northern Pacific Railroad at Duluth. His son, W. H. Rogers, is a shipping merchant at 411 California Street, San Francisco."

Joseph Rogers's son, William H., married Louisa A. Greeley, the daughter of S. F. (Greeley) Anderick, whom Deming also interviewed (see III.D.8, S. F. ANDERICK STATEMENT, 24 JUN 1887).

I was born in Western, Oneida Co., N.Y., Feb. 10, 1805. Our family moved to Phelpstown a few miles south of Palmyra, N.Y., in 1815, where I resided until 1842. I was often in Palmyra, and was well acquainted with Jo Smith, who became the Mormon prophet. When a young man he claimed to receive revelations from the Lord where treasures were buried. He told Peter Rupert[1] and Mr. Cunningham,[2] a blacksmith (simple-minded old men), that there was a chest of gold buried on my brother-in-law, Henry Murphy's,[3] farm, under a beech tree. Henry's younger brother, Jack, said that must be stopped, and he obtained some filth in a sap bucket and got up in the beech tree before they arrived in the evening. They came and Mr. Rupert held the Bible open and a lighted candle as prophet Jo directed, while

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1. Perhaps Peter Rupert listed in the 1830 census of Johnstown, Montgomery County, New York, in his twenties (1830:212).

2. Perhaps James Cunningham listed in the 1830 census of Phelps, Ontario County, New York, in his forties (1830:35).

3. Perhaps Henry Murphy listed in the 1830 census of Lyons, Wayne County, New York, in his thirties (1830:125).

Peter dug for the chest of gold. Jack called Peter three times and he looked up and said, "Here am I, Lord," and received the filth in his face. Peter told me and others that the Lord chastised him and he had to stop his digging. He said he paid Jo for the information. I told him he ought not to believe Jo, for he was a liar and imposter. He said Jo would put a spell on him and that he would have to stand two weeks. He said Jo had perfect command over men. He believed he was a prophet. Jack was called Lord Murphy afterwards. There were many others similarly duped by Jo. Many of Jo's victims were from New Jersey and believed in witches and ghosts. He could not fool the New England or York State Yankees. Jo Smith and his adherents dug a cave in a hill in Manchester, N.Y., and used to go there, he said, to consult with the Lord. He had a door at the entrance fastened with a padlock.[4] The sheriff took possession and found much property which had been stolen from farmers about there. Jo had left for Ohio. It was believed that Jo intended to remove the property.

I had the affidavits of six creditable farmers who lived in Manchester, N.Y., that Jo Smith, who became the Mormon prophet, stole their chickens and sheep. I lost them moving. Farmers said he was a terror to the neighborhood and that he would either have to go to State prison, be hung, or leave the county, or he would be killed.[5] Jo contrived in every way to obtain money without work. The farmers claimed that not a week passed without Jo stole something. I knew at least one hundred farmers in the towns of Phelps, Manchester and Palmyra, N.Y., who would make oath that Jo Smith the Mormon prophet was a liar, intemperate and a base imposter. His father, old Jo, was called a devil. He was very intemperate, profane and vulgar in conversation. Jo, the prophet, said much about his troubles with the devil and that he, the devil, got the better of him much of the time. Jo traveled about the country considerable and was well known.

...[6] But few persons about Palmyra and Manchester became Mormons. Jo, the prophet, pretended to tell fortunes for pay. He could read the character of men readily and could tell who he could dupe.

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4. Evidently the same cave described by Lorenzo Saunders (see III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 8).

5. See III.J.15, STEPHEN S. HARDING TO THOMAS GREGG, FEB 1882, 40; and III.K.14, JOHN BARBER AND HENRY HOWE ACCOUNT, 1841, 581.

6. At this point Rogers relates two anecdotes about Mormons speaking in tongues and attempting to raise the dead. Because they evidently postdate the Mormon exodus from New York in 1831, this portion of his statement has been deleted.

[Signed] JOSEPH ROGERS.
[Seal]

Witnessed by:
HELEN ROGERS (Daughter).

Los Gatos, Cal, May 16, 1887.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 16th day of May, A.D., 1887.
JOHN F. TOBIN,[7]
Notary Public.

7. Perhaps John F. Tobin listed in the 1870 census of Santa Clara, Santa Clara County, California, as a forty-five-year-old Irish-born "Huckster" (1870:144).

8.
S. F. ANDERICK STATEMENT, 24 JUNE 1887

Naked Truths About Mormonism (January 1888): 2.

EDITORIAL NOTE

"Mrs. S. F. Anderick," according to her statement to Arthur B. Deming, was born in 1809 in northeastern New York. When she was about three, her family moved to Palmyra, New York. After her mother's death in 1823, and her father's departure, Anderick remained in Palmyra with her uncle Earl Wilcox until December 1828 when she rejoined her father on his new farm located twenty miles west of Rochester, New York. In her statement Anderick skips to 1852, the year she moved to California and evidently located in San Francisco. Before moving to California, however, Anderick may have lived a short time in Michigan, where her daughter, Louisa, married William H. Rogers in 1850 (see n. 12 below). A biographical sketch of Rogers mentions his marriage to Louisa A. Greeley. This would imply that Anderick had remarried by 1887 and that she had been formerly known as S. F. Greeley. The Federal Census of Plascerville, El Dorado County, California, for 1860 lists William H. and Louisa A. Rogers, and nearby a Gilman and Sarah Greeley. Sarah Greeley's age of fifty in 1860 is consistent with S. F. Anderick's birth on 7 May 1809.

Deming also collected the following two statements attesting to Anderick's character. The first is by G. W. Izen, pastor of the Simpson Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church of San Francisco; the second by C. H. Fowler, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church living in San Francisco.

Sa[n] Francisco, Cal.
Dec. 21, 1887.

A. B. Deming, Esq., Oakland, Cal.—*Dear Sir:* Mrs. S. F. Anderick, of whom you inquire, is a member of my church. She is a most estimable Christian woman, and is possessed of more than average intellectual ability and culture. She is careful in speech and reliable in judgment; sound in mind and of unimpeachable veracity. Her testimony would be held as first-class in any court of justice, upon any subject with which she might be conversant.

Respectfully,

G. W. IZEN,
Pastor Simpson Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, San Francisco, Cal.

435 Buchanan Street,
S[an]. F[rancisco]. Cal.

A. B. Deming, Esq.—*Dear Sir:* I am personally acquainted with Mrs. S. F. Anderick, and have been for two years. She lives on this street, one block from my residence. I have often met her in church, in society, and in her home. I am certain that she is remarkably well preserved and is sound in mind. She is a woman of intelligence, and of high moral and Christian character.

Always sincerely,
C. H. FOWLER,
Bishop of the M.E. Church.

I was born in New York State near the Massachusetts line, May 7, 1809. In 1812 my parents moved to a farm two miles from the village, and in the township of Palmyra, New York. In 1823 mother died, and I went to her sister's, Mrs. Earl Wilcox,[1] when I lived much of the time until December, 1828, when I went to live with father who had again married and settled on a farm on the Holland Patent, twenty miles west of Rochester, New York. Uncle Earl's farm was four miles south of Palmyra village, and his house was nearly opposite old Jo Smith's, father of the Mormon prophet. Old Jo[2] was dissipated. He and his son Hyrum[3] worked some at coopering. Hyrum was the only son sufficiently educated to teach school. I attended when he taught in the log school-house east of uncle's. He also taught in the Stafford District. He and Sophronia[4] were the most respected of the family, who were not

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1. Earl Wilcox, between twenty-seven and forty-five years old, is listed in the 1820 Palmyra census with his wife and three sons. He may be the same Earl Wilcox who was a member of the Second Methodist Church of Williamson, organized in 1828 (McIntosh 1877, 192). He was also evidently a witness for Elias Durfee's Indenture, dated 1 April 1833 (original in Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York).

2. On Joseph Smith, Sr. (1771-1840), see "Introduction to Joseph Smith, Sr., Collection."

3. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

4. On Sophronia Smith (1803-76), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 16.

much thought of in the community. They cleared the timber from only a small part of their farm, and never paid for the land. They tried to live without work. I have often heard the neighbors say they did not know how the Smiths lived, they earned so little money. The farmers who lived near the Smiths had many sheep and much poultry stolen. They often sent officers to search the premises of the Smiths for stolen property, who usually found the house locked. It was said the creek near the house of the Smiths was lined with the feet and heads of sheep.

Uncle's children were all sons, and they played with Smith's younger children; I associated much with Sophronia Smith, the oldest daughter, as she was the only girl near my age who lived in our vicinity. I often accompanied her, Hyrum, and young Jo Smith, who became the Mormon prophet, to apple parings and parties. Jo was pompous, pretentious and active at parties. He claimed, when a young man, he could tell where lost or hidden things and treasures were buried or located with a forked witch hazel.[5] He deceived many farmers, and induced them to dig nights for chests of gold, when the pick struck the chest, someone usually spoke, and Jo would say the enchantment was broken, and the chest would leave.

Williard Chase,[6] a Methodist who lived about two miles from uncle's, while digging a well, found a gray smooth stone about the size and shape of an egg.[7] Sallie, Williard's sister, also a Methodist, told me several times that young Jo Smith, who became the Mormon prophet, often came to inquire of her where to dig for treasures.[8] She told me she would place the stone in a hat and hold it to her face, and claimed things would be brought to her view. Sallie let me have it several times, but I never could see anything in or through it. I heard that Jo obtained it and called it a peep-stone, which he used in the place of the witch hazel. Uncle refused to let Jo dig on his farm. I have seen many holes where he dug on other farms.

When Jo joined the Presbyterian Church, in Palmyra village, it caused much talk and surprise, as he claimed to receive revelations from

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5. Regarding Joseph Jr.'s use of a divining rod, see Quinn 1987, 36.

6. On Willard Chase (1798-1871), see introduction to III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833.

7. See III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 240-41.

8. John Stafford said Sally Chase would look into a stone for buried treasure and Willard would dig (III.B.1, KELLEY NOTES, 6 MAR 1881, 16). Sally's use of a stone is mentioned in several sources (e.g., I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:63; and III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 8, 9).

the Lord.[9] He also claimed he found some gold plates with characters on them, in a hill between uncle's and father's, which I often crossed. Several times I saw what he claimed were the plates, which were covered with a cloth. They appeared to be six or eight inches square. He frequently carried them with him. I heard they kept them under the brick hearth.[10]

He was from home much summers. Sometimes he said he had been to Broome County, New York, and Pennsylvania. Several times while I was visiting Sophronia Smith at old Jo's house, she told me that a stranger who I saw there several times in warm weather and several months apart, was Mr. Rigdon.[11] At other times the Smith children told me that Mr. Rigdon was at their house when I did not see him. I did not read much in the "Book of Mormon" because I had no confidence in Jo. Palmyra people claimed that Jo did not know enough to be the author of the "Book of Mormon," and believed that Rigdon was its author. I was acquainted with most of the people about us, and with Martin Harris.

On my way to California I stopped in Salt Lake City from July, 1852, until March, 1853. I received much attention from Mormon ladies because I was acquainted, and had danced with their prophet.

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9. Lorenzo Saunders remembered going to Sabbath School with Joseph Smith at the old Presbyterian Church at Palmyra (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 2). Smith said he did not join any of the churches, but admitted attending their meetings as often as occasion permitted (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 2). Because Lucy Smith and three of her older children joined the Presbyterian Church, together with the possibility that Joseph Jr. may have attended some meetings with other family members, some observers may have assumed Joseph Jr. was also a member.

10. Numerous sources describe the plates being hidden under the Smiths' hearth (e.g., I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:67-68; and III.D.5, CAROLINE ROCKWELL SMITH STATEMENT, 25 MAR 1885).

11. Presumably this alleged sighting of Rigdon took place before Anderick left Palmyra in December 1828. Her mention of two sightings several months apart during warm weather is evidently designed to support Pomeroy Tucker's account of the "mysterious stranger" seen at the Smith residence during the summer of 1827 (III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 28, 46, 48, 75). This part of Anderick's statement is highly suspect, however (see also III.D.9, LORENZO SAUNDERS STATEMENT, 21 JUL 1887).

[Signed.] MRS. S. F. ANDERICK.
[Seal.]

Witnessed by:
MRS. L. A. ROGERS (Daughter),[12]
OSCAR G. ROGERS (Grandson).[13]

Subscribed and sworn before F. S. Baker, Notary Public for Monterey County, California, June 24, 1887.

12. Evidently Louisa A. (Greeley) Rogers, who married William H. Rogers (son of Joseph Rogers) on 21 March 1850, apparently at Detroit, Michigan (*History of Santa Clara County, California,* 1881, 655; see also III.D.7, JOSEPH ROGERS STATEMENT, 16 MAY 1887). Louisa A. Rogers, age twenty-eight, is listed with her husband (age thirty) in the 1860 census of Plascerville, El Dorado County, California.

13. Evidently Oscar G. Rogers, son of William H. and Louisa A. (Greeley) Rogers, born on 11 January 1867, apparently at Los Gatos, Santa Clara County, California (*History of Santa Clara County, California,* 1881, 655). The *San Francisco Directory* for 1887 lists both Oscar G. Rogers and his father William H. Rogers living at the same residence.

9.
LORENZO SAUNDERS STATEMENT, 21 JULY 1887

Naked Truths About Mormonism (January 1888): 2.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Three years after his interviews with the Kelleys, which remained unpublished, Lorenzo Saunders[1] made the following statement for Arthur B. Deming on 21 July 1887. When Deming printed the statement in the January 1888 issue of his *Naked Truths,* it became the first and only statement of Lorenzo Saunders published during his lifetime. An earlier statement Saunders made to Thomas Gregg in 1885 remained unpublished until 1914 (III.J.20, LORENZO SAUNDERS TO THOMAS GREGG, 28 JAN 1885).

HILLSDALE COUNTY, State of Michigan.

Lorenzo Saunders being duly sworn deposes and says: That I reside in Reading, Hillsdale County, State of Michigan; that I was born in the town of Palmyra, Wayne County, State of New York, on June 7, A.D. 1811, and am now seventy-six years of age. That I lived in said town of Palmyra until I was forty three years of age. That I lived within one mile of Joseph Smith at the time said Joseph Smith claimed that he found the "tablets" on which the "Book of Mormon" was revealed. That I went to the "Hill Comorah" on the Sunday following the date that Joseph Smith claimed he found the plates, it being three miles from my home, and I tried to find the place where the earth had been broken by being dug up, but was unable to find any place where the ground had been disturbed.[2]

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1. On Lorenzo Saunders (1811-88), see introduction to III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884.

2. Strictly speaking, the "Sunday following" was the next day, 23 September 1827. However, Saunders may have intended Sunday, 30 September 1827. See also III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 16; and III.J.20, LORENZO SAUNDERS TO THOMAS GREGG, 28 JAN 1885.

That my father died on the 10th day of October, A.D. 1825.[3] That in March of 1827, on or about the 15th of said month I went to the house of Joseph Smith for the purpose of getting some maple sugar to eat, that when I arrived at the house of said Joseph Smith, I was met at the door by [Samuel] Harrison Smith,[4] Jo's brother. That at a distance of ten or twelve rods from the house there were five men that were engaged in talking, four of whom I knew, the fifth one was better dressed than the rest of those whom I was acquainted with. I inquired of Harrison Smith who the stranger was? He informed me his name was Sidney Rigdom[5] with whom I afterwards became acquainted and found to be Sidney Rigdon. This was in March, A.D. 1827, the second spring after the death of my father.[6] I was frequently at the house of Joseph Smith from 1827 to 1830. That I saw Oliver Cowdery[7] writing, I suppose the "Book of Mormon" with books and manuscripts laying on the table before him; that I went to school to said Oliver Cowdery and know him well. That in the summer of 1830, I heard Sidney Rigdon preach a sermon on Mormonism.[8] This was after the "Book of Mormon" had been published, which took about three years from the time that Joseph Smith claimed to have had his revelation.

[Signed.] LORENZO SAUNDERS.
[Seal.]

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3. That Enoch Saunders died on 10 October 1825 is confirmed in *Wayne Sentinel,* 18 October 1825.

4. On Samuel Harrison Smith (1808-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 13.

5. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

6. Despite Saunders's confidence in this last statement about seeing Rigdon in March 1827, he came to the conclusion only after a great deal of hesitation (see III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, n. 18; and III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 7). In his 17 September 1884 interview, Saunders said it was Samuel who identified the well-dressed stranger; but on 12 November 1884 he said it was Hyrum. The stranger may have actually been the well-to-do Josiah Stowell or Joseph Knight, Sr.

7. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

8. In December 1830 Rigdon preached at Palmyra's Young Men's Library Society in the third story of Exchange Row (see also III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 9; III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 6; and III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 76-79).

Sworn and subscribed to before me this 21st day of July, A.D. 1887.

LINUS S. PARMELEE,[9]
Justice of the Peace of Reading, Mich.

9. Probably L. S. Parmelee listed in the 1860 census of Reading, Hillsdale County, Michigan, as a forty-five-year-old "F[ree] W[ill] Baptist Clergy[man]" (1860:501). He is apparently the same "Rev. L. S. Parmelee" who conducted Lorenzo Saunders's funeral service (see *Reading Telephone News,* 17 February 1888).

E.

Palmyra Newspapers

1.
WAYNE SENTINEL, 1824-1836

The first newspaper published in what is now Wayne County, New York, was the *Palmyra Register,* first issued in November 1817 (*Palmyra Register,* 1817-31; followed by *Western Farmer,* 1821-22; followed by *Palmyra Herald,* 1822-23; followed by *Wayne Sentinel,* 1823-44). In October 1823 founder Timothy C. Strong sold the paper to Egbert B. Grandin and Pomeroy Tucker, who changed the name to the *Wayne Sentinel.* From 1824 to 1836, the *Sentinel* occasionally published items of importance to the study of Mormon origins. Compared with Abner Cole's *Palmyra Reflector,* the *Wayne Sentinel* contains little about Joseph Smith and the birth of Mormonism. Dale Morgan suggested that "the *Wayne Sentinel* refrained from comment on the Book of Mormon because it had been responsible for printing it" (J. P. Walker 1986, 400).[1]

[*29 September 1824*]

TO THE PUBLIC[2]

Whereas reports have been industriously put in circulation, that my son

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1. In addition to the items presented in this collection, the *Wayne Sentinel* frequently published a "List of Letters, Remaining in the Post Office at Palmyra," some of which may pertain to the Smiths. The following items are of possible interest:

1. Unclaimed letter for "Smith[,] Joseph and Hiram" (*Wayne Sentinel,* 13 October 1826). Letter remaining as of 30 September 1826.
2. Unclaimed letter for "Lucy Smith" (*Wayne Sentinel,* 5 January 1827). Letter remaining as of 31 December 1826.
3. Unclaimed letters for "Smith[,] Joseph Jun.," "Smith[,] Samuel," and "Smith & Co." (*Wayne Sentinel,* 5 October 1827). The last letter is dated 1 October 1827.

For other letters remaining in the Palmyra Post Office for a "Joseph Smith" prior to the lists in the *Wayne Sentinel,* see *Palmyra Register,* 13 and 20 January 1819; and *Palmyra Herald,* 2 October 1822.

2. This announcement concerning the body of Alvin Smith appears in six consecutive issues of the *Sentinel* as a paid advertisement: 29 September 1824; 6, 13, 20, 27 October 1824; and 3 November 1824.

Alvin[3] had been removed from the place of his interment and dissected, which reports, every person possessed of human sensibility must know, are peculiarly calculated to harrow up the mind of a parent and deeply wound the feelings of relations—therefore, for the purpose of ascertaining the truth of such reports, I, with some of my neighbors, this morning repaired to the grave, and removing the earth, found the body which had not been disturbed.

This method is taken for the purpose of satisfying the minds of those who may have heard the report, and of informing those who have put it in circulation, that it is earnestly requested they would desist therefrom; and that it is believed by some, that they have been stimulated more by a desire to injure thh [the] reputation of certain persons than a philanthropy for the peace and welfare of myself and friends.

JOSEPH SMITH.[4]

Palmyra, Sept. 25th, 1824.[5]

[*24 November 1826*]

MARRIED—In Manchester ... Mr. Hiram Smith, to Miss Jerusha Barden. ...[6]

[*26 June 1829*]

Just about in this particular region, for some time past, much speculation

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3. On Alvin Smith (1798-1823), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 10.

4. On Joseph Smith, Sr. (1771-1840), see "Introduction to Joseph Smith, Sr., Collection."

5. It is unusual that rumors about Alvin's body should circulate nearly a year after his death (19 November 1823). The date Joseph Sr. issued this statement, 25 September 1824, is three days after Joseph Jr.'s second annual visit to the hill. Presumably Smith's neighbors knew about the messenger's instruction to bring Alvin the following year (see III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 9-10; III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 16; IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 1; and I.C.1, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., INTERVIEW WITH FAYETTE LAPHAM, 1830, 306-7). See also Quinn 1987, 134-38.

6. Hyrum Smith and Jerusha Barden were married on 2 November 1826 (L. Smith 1853, 40; I.H.3, SMITH FAMILY BIBLE RECORDS, NO DATES). On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12. On Jerusha Barden Smith (1805-37), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 120.

has existed, concerning a pretended discovery, through superhuman means, of an ancient record, of a religious and divine nature and origin, written in ancient characters impossible to be interpreted by any to whom the special gift has not been imparted by inspiration. It is generally known and spoken of as the "*Golden Bible.*" Most people entertain an idea that the whole matter is the result of a gross imposition, and a grosser superstition. It is pretended that it will be published as soon as the translation is completed. Meanwhile we have been furnished with the following, which is represented to us as intended for the title page of the work—we give it as a curiosity. ...[7]

[*19 March 1830*]

We are requested to announce that the "Book of Mormon" will be ready for sale in the course of next week.

[*26 March 1830*]

THE BOOK OF MORMON:[8]

...[9]

The above work, containing about 600 pages, large Duodecimo, is now for sale, whole-sale and retail, at the Palmyra Bookstore, by

HOWARD & GRANDIN.[10]

Palmyra, March 26, 1830.

[*1 January 1831*][11]

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7. Then follows the title page of the Book of Mormon (see III.L.12, BOOK OF MORMON COPYRIGHT, 11 JUN 1829).

8. This announcement of the Book of Mormon's sale appears in four consecutive issues of the *Sentinel:* 19 March 1830; 2, 9, and 26 April 1830. The first announcement appears under both Luther Howard's and Egbert B. Grandin's names; the rest only under Grandin's.

9. Then follows the title page of the Book of Mormon (see III.L.12, BOOK OF MORMON COPYRIGHT, 11 JUN 1829).

10. Egbert B. Grandin printed the Book of Mormon on the third floor, west end, of Exchange Row; Luther Howard bound the book on the second floor; and the books were sold in Grandin's bookstore on the first floor. On Egbert B. Grandin (1806-45), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 77.

11. This is a one page extra containing a New Year's poem and bearing the title "Address of the Carrier to the Patrons of the Wayne Sentinel." Two lines of the poem pertain to Sidney Rigdon.

...
While *Rigdon,*[12] dipt in many waters,
Preaches *Gold Bible* to the *loafers*;
...

[*27 May 1831*]

Several families, numbering about fifty souls, took up their line of march from this town [Palmyra] last week for the "promised land," among whom was *Martin Harris,*[13] one of the *original* believers in the "Book of Mormon." Mr. Harris was among the early settlers of this town, and has ever borne the character of an honorable and upright man, and an obliging and benevolent neighbor. He had secured to himself by honest industry a respectable fortune—and he has left a large circle of acquaintances and friends to pity his delusion.[14]

[*17 June 1836*]

The Mormons.—Three *priests!* belonging to this sect, passed through this village two days since. Who do you guess they were? You are familiar with the pedigree of two of them.—They belong to old neighbor Smith, the *money digger,* father of JOE, the great Mormon prophet. We understand that the *boys* were on their way to Boston, to preach to the *unenlightened!* Bostonians. *O tempora! O mores!*[15]

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12. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

13. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

14. Those who followed Martin Harris represent one of three major groups that migrated to Ohio in the spring of 1831. The two others are the Colesville branch led by Hyrum Smith, which departed in April 1831 (Porter 1971, 296-311), and the Fayette Saints led by Lucy Smith, who left about the beginning of May 1831 (ibid., 311-22). Harris sold about 151 acres of land to Thomas Lakey on 7 April 1831, and by agreement had to vacate the property by 1 May 1831 (see introduction to III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829).

15. The two sons of Joseph Smith, Sr., mentioned here might be Samuel, William, or Don Carlos, since Joseph and Hyrum did not leave Ohio for Boston until 25 July 1836, although there is no record to confirm this supposition (see J. Smith 1948, 2:463-64; see also R. L. Anderson 1984, 499-506).

2.
PALMYRA FREEMAN, CIRCA AUGUST 1829

"Golden Bible," *Palmyra Freeman,* circa August 1829, as reprinted in *Advertiser and Telegraph* (Rochester), 31 August 1829. Reprinted in *Painesville Telegraph,* 22 September 1829.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Because an original copy of this item cannot be located, I have relied on a reprint in the *Advertiser and Telegraph,* edited by J. H. Hadley of Rochester, New York. The original printing in the *Freeman* was probably published in August 1829, and was evidently based on information supplied by Martin Harris (compare III.F.2, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH *ROCHESTER* [NY] *GEM,* CIRCA JUNE 1829).

The Palmyra Freeman says—The greatest piece of superstition that has come within our knowledge, now occupies the attention of a few individuals of this quarter. It is generally known and spoken of as the "*Golden Bible.*" Its proselytes give the following account of it. In the fall of 1827,[1] a person by the name of *Joseph Smith,* of Manchester, Ontario county, reported that he had been visited in a dream by the spirit of the Almighty, and informed that in a certain hill in that town, was deposited the golden Bible, containing an ancient record of a divine nature and origin. After having been thrice visited, as he states, he proceeded to the spot, and after penetrating "mother earth" a short distance the Bible was found, together with a huge pair of Spectacles! He had been directed, however, not to let any mortal being examine them, "under no less penalty than instant death." They were therefore, nicely wrapped up and excluded from the "vulgar gaze of poor wicked mortals!" It was said that the *leaves* of the Bible were *plates* of gold, about eight inches thick, on which were engraved characters or Hyeroglyphics. By placing the spectacles in a hat, and looking into it, Smith could (he said so, at least) interpret these characters.

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1. Martin Harris said he first heard about Joseph Smith's plates in the fall of 1827 (III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 167-68; see also III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 4).

An account of this discovery was soon circulated. The subject was almost invariably treated as it should have been—with *contempt.* A few, however, believed the "*golden*" story, among whom was *Martin Harris,*[2] an honest and industrious farmer of this town, (Palmyra). So blindly credulous was Harris, that he took some of the characters interpreted by Smith and went in search of some one, besides the interpreter, who was learned enough to *English* them; but all to whom he applied (among the number was a Professor Mitchell[3] of New York,) happened not to be possessed of sufficient knowledge to give satisfaction! Harris returned and set Smith to work at interpreting the Bible. He has at length performed the task, and the work is soon to be put to press in Palmyra. Its language and doctrine are said to be far superior to those of the Book of life!!!

2. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

3. On Samuel L. Mitchell (1764-1831), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 45.

3.
PALMYRA REFLECTOR, 1829-1831

Between 1829 and 1831, the *Palmyra Reflector* published numerous items dealing with Mormon origins in the Palmyra/Manchester area. The first series of this weekly began publication on 2 September 1829 and ran through 16 December 1829; the second series ran from 22 December 1829 through 19 March 1831. In the words of one nineteenth-century historian, the paper was devoted to "science, amusement, and ironical castigation" (McIntosh 1877, 145). The Lyons *Countryman* of 7 September 1830 called it "a sarcastical, obscene little paper," and said the weekly was "well known in this quarter." According to Lucy Smith, the paper circulated ten or twenty miles into the country (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, 1853:149).

The editor was "O[bediah]. Dogberry Jr.," a pseudonym for Abner Cole (c. 1782-1835),[1] son of Southworth Cole, who used the printing press of "E. B. Grandin & Co." during the evenings and on Sundays. Grandin described him as "eccentric ... and full of fun," a man who "stands his ground" (*Wayne Sentinel,* Extra, 1 January 1831). Prior to his editorial career, Cole had been a justice of the peace in Palmyra, 1814-15 ("Old Village Records," April 1814 and April 1815, typescript, Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York; McIntosh 1877, 140); a village constable, 1818 ("Old Village Record," April 1818); and an overseer of highways in the same road district (26) with the Smiths, 1816 (Palmyra Highway Records, 1816, typescript, Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York). He was still practicing law in 1827 when the *Wayne Sentinel* mentioned his involvement in a land transaction (2 March 1827). Soon after the demise of his Palmyra tabloid in 1831, Cole moved to Rochester and began publishing another paper, the *Liberal Advocate,* which ran from 23 February 1832 through 22 November 1834. Cole died at Rochester on 13 July 1835 (see *Rochester Daily Democrat,* 15 July 1835; *Wayne Sentinel,* 17 July 1835).

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1. On 19 March 1831 the *Reflector* notified delinquent subscribers to send payment to either "the Post Master in this village, or to A. Cole, Esq." Lucy Smith said the paper was published by a man named "Cole, an ex-justice of the peace" (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, 1853:148).

On 2 September 1829 Cole began making occasional notices about the Book of Mormon, then at press. Since Cole published his paper in Grandin's office, he had access to proofs of the Book of Mormon text as it was being set. On 2 January 1830 Cole included in his paper the text of 1 Nephi 1:1-2:3. This was followed by 1 Nephi 2:4-15 on 13 January 1830, and Alma 43:22-40 on 22 January 1830. The publication of these texts violated Joseph Smith's copyright, but Cole was determined to publish excerpts from the Book of Mormon despite Hyrum Smith's threats. Soon Joseph was summoned from Pennsylvania. Cole was at first belligerent, but finally relented and promised to desist (see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:111-13). However, Cole continued to publish items about Joseph Smith and the "Gold Bible" with increasing vituperation.

Joseph Smith was not the only person angered by Cole's paper. Within weeks following his confrontation with Smith, a group of outraged Presbyterians visited Grandin's office to complain about Cole's paper. On 16 February 1831 Grandin noted in his diary: "Some *threats* have been made within a few days, by some presbyterians, that they would withdraw their pat=ronage from my establishment in consequence of my printing the Reflector—paid no attention to them" (photocopy of original, Wayne County Historical Society, Lyons, New York).

In attacking Joseph Smith, Cole sometimes employed an imitation scripture style. This style was not unique to Cole, for *Paul Pry's Weekly Bulletin* of Rochester, edited by Jeremiah O. Bloch,[2] used the technique a month before Cole began his paper. Bloch, for example, published satires based on local politics titled "Chronicles—Chapter I," "Chronicles—Chapter II," and "Chronicles—Chapter III" (see *Paul Pry's Weekly Bulletin,* 25 July, 1 August, and 8 August 1829). While the content of Bloch's satire's have nothing directly to do with Mormonism, they allude to Joseph the prophet and the gold plates. "Chronicles—Chapter III," for example, ends with the following words: "Behold all these things, yea many more, are engraven on the massy leaves of the Golden Book, and are now in the custody of Joseph the prophet" (8 August 1829).

Cole was aware of Bloch's Rochester paper since he published a letter from "Paul Pry" in his paper (*Palmyra Reflector,* 16 March 1830; see

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2. Cole names Bloch as the editor of the Rochester *Bulletin*: "The masons in Newark, as about establishing a paper, to be conducted by a certain Mr. Bloch, of 'Paul Pry' memory" (*Palmyra Freeman,* 17 November 1829). The *Newark Republican* was published by Jeremiah O. Bloch.

also 22 December 1829). In January 1830 Cole began satirizing local politics by using a scriptural style in "Chronicles of the Geneva Bull," which alluded to "Joseph the Prophet" and the "Temple of Nephi" (1 January, 10 January 1830). Later that same year Cole began publishing entire pieces on Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon written in the imitation scripture style (12 June 1830).

A supporter of Andrew Jackson, Cole may have been offended by the Book of Mormon's perceived anti-Masonry. Cole's position is revealed in the title of one of his parodies: "Ontario Chronicles. The Biter bit—Or, Anti-Masonic Wit outwitted" (*Palmyra Reflector,* 2 January 1830). In another item Cole criticized anti-Masons and praised the establishment of Bloch's *Newark Republican,* described as a Masonic paper (ibid., 22 June 1830; *Palmyra Freeman,* 17 November 1829). When Palmyra anti-Masonic publisher Luther Howard remained silent about the Book of Mormon, Cole accused him of privately believing it (see below, under 16 March 1830). Thus Cole was one of the first readers of the Book of Mormon to connect its warning against latter-day "secret combinations" with Freemasonry (see below, under 23 September 1829; cf. Vogel 1989).

One puzzle has been how Cole knew so much about Joseph Smith's treasure-seeking activities in Manchester, especially in connection with "Walters the Magician," recently identified as Luman Walters (c. 1788-1860) of Gorham, New York (Quinn 1987, 82-84, 85-97). According to Lorenzo Saunders, Walters was associated with the Smith and Chase families in digging a cave in a hill on Manchester Lot 2 sometime before 1825 (see III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 8-9, 12). County records indicate that Cole owned this property since 1816, mortgaged it in 1820, continued paying taxes on it until at least 1823, and probably lost it in 1824 (see ibid., n. 27). Saunders, who was a witness to the digging, was told by Joseph Smith, Sr., that Joseph Jr. "could see in his peep stone what there was in that cave." Perhaps the digging on the hill began while Cole was owner and with his permission.

On 1 January 1831 a resident of Farmington, New York, wrote to Cole complaining about the lack of information about Mormon origins in the local papers: "The two papers published in your village, for reasons easily explained, decline at present, throwing any light on this subject [of Joe Smith and his "Golden Bible"]. To you, and you alone, do we look for an expose of the principle facts and characters, as connected with this singular business" (see below, under 6 January 1831). Compared to the *Wayne Sentinel,* Cole's paper published a great deal on Mormonism. While the quality of journalism

in the *Reflector* does not compare to the *Sentinel* or other established newspapers in the nineteenth-century, it remains an important historical source for the study of Joseph Smith and Mormon origins in the Palmyra/Manchester area.

[*2 September 1829*]

The Golden Bible, by Joseph Smith Junior,[3] author and proprietor, is now in press and will shortly appear. Priestcraft is short lived! [p. 2]

[*16 September 1829*]

The *Book of Mormon* is expected to be ready for *delivery* in the course of one year.—Great and marvellous things will "come to pass" about those days. [p. 10]

[*23 September 1829*]

We understand that the Anti-Masons have declared war against the Gold Bible.—Oh! how impious.

The number of the Gold Bible Apostles is said to be complete.[4] Jo Smith Jr. is about to assign to each, a mission to the *heathen*.

We understand that Abraham Chaddock[5] intends to build the first house in [Martin] Harris'[6] New-Jerusalem.

Some few evenings since, a man in the town of Mendon, had a *loud*

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3. On Joseph Smith, Jr. (1804-44), see "Introduction to Joseph Smith, Jr., Collection."

4. Probably a reference to the number of those permitted to see the plates: Joseph Smith and the eleven special witnesses. Although the quorum of twelve apostles was not formerly organized until February 1835, evidence suggests that certain individuals had been denominated apostles prior to that time. A June 1829 revelation referred to the apostolic calling of Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer (D&C 18:9), and the "Articles and Covenants" of the church mentioned the apostleship of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery (D&C 20:2-3; 21:1, 19). Soon after the organization of the church, the apostleship may have expanded beyond the concept of Book of Mormon apostles. Ezra Booth, for instance, mentioned in 1831 that "Ziba [Peterson] was deprived of his Elder and Apostleship" and that Peterson had been "one of the twelve Apostles" (Howe 1834, 208; see also Vogel 1988, 145).

5. This person remains unidentified.

6. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

call *to go* and preach the doctrines contained in the Gold Bible, under heavy denunciations.[7] [p. 14]

[*30 September 1829*]

"BEWARE OF SECRET ASSOCIATIONS."

We take the above quotation from the head of the editorial column, in the "PALMYRA FREEMAN," and since we are informed that [Mr. Sco?]vil[8] can quote scripture whenever it suits [his pur]pose, we acknowledge that our aston[ishm]ent is somewhat lessened. But where did the grave editor of the Freeman find this "solemn warning?" Has he been permitted to [e]xamine the hidden mysteries of "the Book of [Morm]on?" It appears *hung up* in double and [?]eble capitals, with double comma's, to prove, (as we suppose,) its authenticity; but the truth of it is, the quotation is not genuine, and probably originated in the *muddy brain* of Oliver Heartwell,[9] who, we are informed, "dreamed strange dreams and saw visions," about the time he was carrying on a *Literary* correspondence with John Q. Adams. ...

The "Gold Bible" is fast gaining *credit*; the *rapid spread* of Islamism was no *touch* to it!

An Extract.—MEN OF UNDERSTANDING.—"This title distinguished a denomination which appeared in Flanders and Brussels, in the year 1511. They owed their origin to an illiterate man whose name was Egidus Cantor, and to *William of Hendenison, a Carmilite Monk.*—They pretended to be honoured with celestial visions; denied that any could arrive at a perfect knowledge of the Holy Scriptures without the extraordinary succours of a divine illumination, and declared the approach of a new revelation from heaven, more perfect than the Gospel of Christ."

How does this *tally* with the pretensions of Jo Smith Jr. and his followers—ha? [p. 18]

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7. A notice of correction appeared in the *Reflector* on 30 September 1829, which reads: "In our last number read for 'Mendon,' Macedon" (p. 18). Dale Morgan connected the reference to "a *loud* call" to Stephen Harding's practical joke on Calvin Stoddard, which occurred about the same time (see J. P. Walker 1986, 394, n. 47; see also III.J.7, STEPHEN S. HARDING TO POMEROY TUCKER, 1 JUN 1867, 80-81; III.J.15, STEPHEN S. HARDING TO THOMAS GREGG, FEB 1882, 48-49).

8. Text is partially damaged in several places.

9. This person remains unidentified.

[*7 October 1829*]

The "New-Jerusalem Reflector" states that the building of the TEMPLE OF NEPHI is to be commenced about the beginning of the first year of the Millenium. Thousands are already flocking to the standard of Joseph the Prophet. The Book of Mormon is expected to astonish the natives!! [p. 22]

[*9 December 1829*]

GOLD BIBLE.

A work bearing this *cognomen* is now in the Press; as much curiosity has been excited in this section of the country on the subject, and as the work itself will not be ready for delivery for some months to come,—at the solicitation of many of our readers we have concluded to commence publishing *extracts* from it on or before the commencement of the second series. [p. 57]

[*2 January 1830*]

GOLD BIBLE.

We do not intend at this time, to discuss the merits or demerits of this work, and feel astonished that some of our neighbors, who profess *liberal* principles, and are probably quite as ignorant on the subject as we are, should give themselves *quite* so much uneasiness about matters that so little concern them. The *Book,* when it shall come before the public, must stand or fall, according to the whims and fancies of its readers. How it will stand the test of rigid criticism, we are not prepared to say, not having as yet examined many of its pages.—We are, however, prepared to state, that from a part of the first chapter, now before us, and which we this day publish,[10] we cannot discover any thing *treasonable,* or which will have a tendency to subvert our liberties. As to its religious character, we have as yet no means of determining, and if we had, we should be quite loth to meddle with the *tender* consciences of our neighbors. [p. 13]

[*13 January 1830*]

The forthcoming "Book of Mormon," has been miscalled the "Gold Bible." [p. 19]

"*Gold Bible.*"—We inadvertently neglected in our remarks last week, respecting this *wonderful* work, to accompany them with the *explanations*

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10. Cole published in this issue the text of 1 Nephi 1:1-2:3.

requisite to a correct understanding of it. The appellation of "Gold Bible," is only a *cant cognomen* that has been given it by the *unbelievers*—for be it known that this Book, as well as the sacred volume which is held so valuable by all good christians, is not without its *revilers* and *unbelievers*—by way of *derision*. The true title of the work, as appears from the copy-right, is "The Book of Mormon"—comprising a great number of Books, or parts, by different primary authors, all of which are divided into Chapters. The first is the "First Book of Nephi," of which we gave an extract in our last, and is continued in the present number of our paper. The whole purports to be a *compilation,* in ancient hieroglyphics, on plates said to resemble plates of *gold,* by one of the chosen of the *lost tribes,* whose name was MORMON. [p. 20]

[*16 March 1830*]

Palmyra, March 11th, 1830.

O. DOGBERRY, ESQ.—

DEAR SIR—When the present series of the Reflector is completed, you will please to erase my name from your list of subscribers.

Yours, &c.
LUTHER HOWARD.[11]

We have only to regret that this "*little* lump of anguish," who measures something more than four feet in his shoes, had not requested an *immediate* discontinuance, as he is the only person of the *same* description our list contains. It is from the enlightened, independent, and *liberal minded,* that we receive and expect support—not from *meddlesome,* canting, or whining hypocrites—it is not from a man who professes, *ostentatiously,* to belong to a Calvinistic church—where himself and family display a profusion of fine clothing—while he *privately* advocates the "Gold Bible."[12] This man has an itching to appear in print—he shall be gratified. We have many communications on hand respecting this *pious* as well as *meddling* worthy. His Geneva friends will not be forgotten. [p. 89]

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11. Luther Howard, a book binder by trade and business partner with Egbert B. Grandin, is difficult to trace after his departure from Palmyra in 1830. He is perhaps the same Luther Howard, in his forties, listed in the 1840 census of Aburn, Cayuga County, New York (1840:71).

12. It is unknown to what extent Luther Howard, the binder of the Book of Mormon and publisher of a local anti-Masonic newspaper (1830-31), may have sympathized with the Book of Mormon's contents.

[*19 April 1830*]

Mr. Editor—

Please advise *hyrum* smith, and some of his ill-bred associates, not to be quite so impertinent, when *decent* folks denounce the imposition of the 'GOLD-BIBLE'[.] The anaththemas [anathemas] of such ignorant wretches, although not feared, are not quite so well relished by some people—Apostles should keep cool.[13] [p. 130]

[*1 May 1830*]

We are informed that an "honest Attorney" (from compunction we suppose,) is about to abandon his lucrative profession, and enter upon the preaching of the "*Gospel* according to"—*Jo Smith.*[14] [p. 5]

[*1 June 1830*]

The *apostle* to the NEPHITES (Cowdery) has *started* for the EAST, on board a boat, with a load of "gOLD bibles," under a command, (as he says) to declare the truth (according to JO SMITH,) "in all the principal cities in the Union."[15] We must, however, caution this second Mohomet, (Jemima Wilkinson,)[16] to be careful how he treads upon the old Saybrook Plat-

13. Willard Chase reported that in April 1830 he approached Hyrum Smith for the return of his seer stone. According to Chase, "I reminded him of his promise, and that he had pledged his honor to return it; but he gave me the lie, saying the stone was not mine nor never was. Harris at the same time flew in a rage, took me by the collar and said I was a liar, and he could prove it by twelve witnesses. After I had extricated myself from him, Hiram, in a rage shook his fist at me, and abused me in a most scandalous manner" (III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 247). One might therefore speculate that Willard Chase was the author of this note.

14. This attorney's identity remains unknown. Perhaps it was Oliver Cowdery's brother Lyman, who may have entertained the idea of joining the Mormon church but later changed his mind.

15. Where Cowdery was headed is unknown, but eight days later, on 9 June 1830, he attended the first church conference in Fayette, New York. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

16. Jemima Wilkinson (1752-1819) believed she was possessed by the spirit of God, which inspired her to found a colony named Jerusalem near Seneca Lake, New York, in 1790 (*Who Was Who in America,* 1967, 653; Malone 1936, 20:226-27).

form.[17] Oliver (he left out his two middle names[18] in the "Book of Mormon,["]) may find his way to the *Simsbury mines.*[19] [p. 28]

[*12 June 1830*]

THE BOOK OF PUKEI.—*Chap[ter].* 1.[20]

1. And it came to pass in the latter days, that wickedness did much abound in the land, and the "Idle and slothful said one to another, let us send for Walters the Magician,[21] who has strange books, and deals with familiar

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17. "Saybrook Platform" refers to a document produced by a synod of conservatives at Saybrook, Connecticut, in 1708, which represented a departure from the independence of early Congregationalism by calling for the strong ecclesiastical control of councils. This was a revision of the former Cambridge Platform of 1648, which had restricted the control of synods (Ketz 1976, 6:223).

18. Oliver Cowdery sometimes signed his name "Oliver H. P. Cowdery" (see III.G.1, OLIVER COWDERY TO HYRUM SMITH, 14 JUN 1829; III.G.3, OLIVER COWDERY TO JOSEPH SMITH, 28 DEC 1829; III.L.17, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., AND MARTIN HARRIS AGREEMENT, 16 JAN 1830; and V.E.5, JOSEPH SMITH HARMONY [PA] LAND RECORDS, 1828-1833).

19. The Simsbury Mines were worked by prisoners.

20. The term "Pukei" might relate to the early American term "Puke," meaning "a poor puny, unhealthy-looking person" (M. Mathews 1951, 2:1326). Also Cole's satire on the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith, titled "The Book of Pukei," might have something to do with an earlier discussion about a man Cole gave the pseudonym of "Pukee." Pukee had left Palmyra for Utica without paying his debts; then in the fall of 1829 he left Utica for New York City, owing money there also (see *Palmyra Reflector,* 22 January 1830, 27; and Johnny O'Rourke to O. Dogberry, ibid., 29 December 1829). Perhaps Cole made a connection between Pukee and Joseph Smith because, in his mind, the Smiths were involved in a money-making scheme and had also left the Palmyra/Manchester area without paying their debts (see III.L.19, NATHAN PIERCE DOCKET BOOK, 1830, under 28 June 1830; and Jessee 1984, 231-32).

21. Believed to be "Luman Walters, of Pultneyville," whom Pomeroy Tucker named as an early treasure-seeking associate of Joseph Smith (III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 38; see also III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 12; and III.I.3, PALMYRA RESIDENTS TO *PAINESVILLE* [OH] *TELEGRAPH,* 12 MAR 1831). Luman Walters (c. 1788-1860) was born in Connecticut. According to the 1830 census, he was a resident of Sodus, New York, which included Pultneyville. Subsequent census returns list him as a physician living

Luman Walter(s) tombstone, Shuman Cemetery, Potter, Yates County, New York. Inscription reads: "L. Walter. Died June 2, 1860. Aged 72 years. Friends nor physicians could not save, This mortal body from the grave." Photographed by Dan Vogel, 1992.

spirits; peradventure he will inform us where the *Nephites,* hid their *treasure,*[22] so be it, that we and our vagabond van, do not perish for lack of sustenance.

2. Now Walters, the Magician, was a man unseemly to look upon, and to profound ignorance added the most consummate impudence,—he obeyed the summons of the idle and slothful, and produced an old book in an unknown tongue, (Cicero's Orations *in latin,*) from whence he read in the presence of the Idle and Slothful strange stories of hidden treasures and of the spirit who had the custody thereof.

3. And the Idle and Slothful paid tribute unto the Magician,[23] and besought him saying, Oh! thou who art wise above all men, and can *interpret* the book that no man understandeth, and can discover hidden things by the power of thy enchantments, lead us, we pray thee to the place where the Nephites buried their treasure, and give us power over "the spirit," and we will be thy servants forever.

4. And the Magician led the *rabble* into a dark grove, in a place called *Manchester,* where after drawing a Magic circle, with a rusty sword, and collecting his motley crew of *latter-demallions,* within the centre, he sacrificed a Cock (a

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in Gorham, New York, and according to family legend, "Luman Walter" was a "clairvoyant." There is also some evidence that Walters traveled to Europe, where it is believed he received training in occult sciences. According to Lorenzo Saunders, Walters appeared in the Palmyra/Manchester area in connection with the Chase and Smith families digging a cave on Manchester Lot 2 sometime before October 1825 (see III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884 8-9, 12). A document which has recently come to light seems to confirm the identification of Luman Walters with "Walters the Magician." The document, written by Diedrich Willers, Jr. (1820-1908), of Fayette, New York, reads: "Fortune tellers are consulted as to the future, many in this neighborhood where ~~ever~~ they wish to find ~~out~~ something <anything> which is lost, or pry into ~~the~~ <hidden> mysteries ~~of hidden things~~ will consult Dr Walters" ("Ambition and Superstition," Miscellaneous Undated Items, Diedrich Willers Papers, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York). Walters died in Gorham on 2 June 1860, and is buried at the Shuman Cemetery in Rushville, Gorham Township, Ontario County, New York (see Quinn 1987, 82-84, 85-97).

22. See Hel. 13:31-37; Morm. 1:17-19.

23. Cole later states that Walters "was paid three dollars per day for his services by the money diggers in this neighborhood" (see below under 28 February 1831, 109). Lorenzo Saunders said Willard Chase and Alvin Smith were also duped by Walters, but "they could not be deceived in it after he [Walters] had gone through with a certain movements & charged them $7" (III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 12).

bird sacred to Minerva) for the purpose of propiciating the *prince* of spirits.

5. All things being ready, the Idle and Slothful fell to work with a zeal deserving a better cause, and many a *live long night* was spent in digging for "the root of all evil."

[6.] Howbeit, owing to the wickedness and hardness of their hearts, these credulous and ignorant knaves, were always disappointed, till finally, their hopes, although frequently on the eve [p. 36] of consummat[i]on—like that of [t]he hypocrite perished, and their hearts became faint within them.

7. And it came to pass, that when the Idle and Slothful became weary of their nightly labors, they said one to another, lo! this *imp* of the Devil, hath deceived us, let us no more of him, or peradventure, ourselves, our wives, and our little ones, will become chargeable on the *town.*

8. Now when Walters the Magician heard these things, he was sorely grieved, and said unto himself, lo! mine occupation is gone, even these ignorant vagabonds, the idle and slothful detect mine impostures. I will away and hide myself, lest the *strong* arm of the law should bring me to justice.

9. And he took his *book,* and his rusty sword, and his *magic* stone, and his *stuffed Toad,* and all his implements of *witchcraft* and retired to the mountains near Great Sodus Bay, where he holds communion with the Devil, even unto this day.

10. Now the rest of the acts of the magician, how his *mantle* fell upon the *prophet* Jo. Smith Jun. and how Jo. made a league with the *spirit,* who afterwards turned out to be an angel, and how he obtained the "Gold Bible," Spectacles, and breast plate—will they not be faithfully recorded in the book of Pukei? [p. 37]

[*22 June 1830*]

... We are however credibly informed, that at a disorderly meeting on Sunday evening at the MARKET one of JO'S *greatest* apostles, gave decided tokens of entire approbation. ...

It has been reported that one of the "Gold Bible" witnesses has been in the habit of whipping and otherwise mal-treating his wife for the sole purpose of making her a proselyte to the faith according to JOE SMITH.[24] [p. 45]

We have been informed that a "Gold Bible" apostle lately undertook to anathematise an infidel.!!! [p. 46]

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24. This was Martin Harris (see III.A.7, LUCY HARRIS STATEMENT, 29 NOV 1833; and III.A.5, G. W. STODDARD STATEMENT, 28 NOV 1833).

[*30 June 1830*]

The age of miracles has *again* arrived, and if the least reliance can be placed upon the assertions, daily made by the "Gold Bible" apostles, (which is somewhat doubtful,) no prophet, since the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus [c. A.D. 70], has performed half so many wonders as have been attributed to that *spindle shanked* ignoramus JO SMITH. This fellow appears to possess the *quint essence* of impudence, while his fellow laborers are not far behind him in this particular—they go from place to place disturbing in a greater or less degree, the peace of the community—denouncing dire damnation on such as may with hold their approbation from one of the most ridiculous impostures, ever promulgated.

JO'S greatest as well as latest miracle, as narrated by St. Martin [Martin Harris], is his 'casting out a devil,' of an uncommon size from a miserable man in the neighborhood of the "great bend" of the Susquehannah.[25] The whole family of *spirits,* who are said to have possessed the fair Magdalene, were mere children, when compared to the *imp* in question. Such was his malignant disposition that before JO took him in hand, he had nigh demolished the [p. 53] *frail* tenement which had for a long time afforded him a comfortable shelter—the flesh was "about to cleave from the bones"—the muscles, tendons &c. could no longer perform their different functions—the habitation of Satan, was about to be laid open to the light of day, when the prophet interfered—went to prayer—the *demoniac* had *faith*—the devil was *routed,* and nature resumed her accustomed order. [p. 54]

[*7 July 1830*]

BOOK OF PUKEI.—Chap[ter]. 2.

Contents.—1. The idle and slothful reverence the prophet.—2 The prophet reveals to them the first appearance of the spirit.—3 Its admonition and promises.—4 Description of the spirit.—5 Mormon—the ten tribes.—6 Their migration—wars—extinction.—7 Gold Bible and contents.—8 spectacles—breastplate—Oliver, &c.

1. And it came to pass, that when the mantle of Walters the Magician

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25. This was Newel Knight of Colesville, New York, out of whom Joseph Smith is said to have cast a devil in April 1830 (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 39-41; IV.A.3, NEWEL KNIGHT AUTOBIOGRAPHY, CIRCA 1846, 49-50; IV.D.13, HARVEY BAKER REMINISCENCE, 1900; and IV.E.1, *BRATTLEBORO'* [VT] *MESSENGER,* 20 NOV 1830).

had fallen upon Joseph, sirnamed the prophet, who was the son of Joseph; that the "idle and slothful" gathered themselves together, in the presence of Joseph, and said unto him, "lo! we will be thy servants forever, do with us, our wives, and our little ones as it may seem good in thine eyes.["]

2. And the prophet answered and said,—"Behold! hath not the mantle of Walters the Magician fallen upon me, and am I not able to do before you my people great wonders, and shew you, at a more proper season, where the Nephites hid their treasures?—for lo! yesternight stood before me in the wilderness of Manchester, the *spirit,* who, from the beginning, has had in keeping all the treasures, hidden in the bowels of the earth.

3. And he said unto me, Joseph, thou son of Joseph, hold up thine head; do the crimes done in thy body fill thee with shame?—hold up thine face and let the light of mine countenance shine upon thee—thou, and all thy father's household, have served me faithfully, according to the best of their knowledge and abilities—I am the spirit that walketh in darkness, and will shew thee great signs and wonders."

4. And I looked, and behold a little old man[26] stood before me, clad, as I supposed, in Egyptian raiment, except his Indian blanket, and moccasins—his beard of silver white, *hung* far below his knees. On his head was an old fashioned military half cocked hat, such as was worn in the days of the patriarch Moses—his speech was sweeter than *molasses,* and his words were the reformed Egyptian.

5. And he again said unto me, "Joseph, thou who hast been surnamed the *ignoramus,* knowest thou not, that great signs and wonders are to be done by thine hands? knowest thou not, that I have been sent unto thee by MORMON, the great apostle to the Nephites—Mormon who was chief among the lost ten tribes of Israel?

6. Knowest thou not that this same apostle to the nephites conducted that *pious* people, who could not abide the wickedness of their brethren, to these happy shores in bark canoes, where after fighting with their brethren the Lamanites, a few hundred years, became wicked themselves, when God sent the *small pox* among them, which killed two thirds of them, and turned the rest into Indians?

7. Knowest thou not, thou weak one of earth, that this same Mormon wrote a book on plates of gold, in the language I now speak, of and

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26. Cole later credits Joseph Smith, Sr., with this description of the messenger, stating that "the elder Smith declared that his son Jo had seen the *spirit,* (which he then described as a little old man with a long beard)" (see below under 14 February 1831, 102).

concerning the aforesaid Nephites and their brethren the Lamanites, and their treasures, (including a box of gold watches[27] on which thou shalt hereafter raise money,) and knowest thou not, that thou art greater than all the "money-digging rabble," and art chosen to interpret the book, which Mormon has written, to wit, the gold Bible?

8. "And lo! I answered the spirit of the money diggers saying, how can these things be, as I can neither read nor write? And he said unto me" 'I will give thee a breast plate, to keep thee from evil, and I will send thee an assistant, even Oliver, the pedagogue.' [p. 60]

Exemption from taxation.—A disciple of the "Gold Bible," lately called on an assessor and demanded an exemption from taxation, to the amount of $1500—alleging that he was a Minister of the Gospel, at the same time producing a certificate, signed by Jo. Smith, and Oliver Cowdry, by way of proof—the course to be taken in this matter has not as yet transpired. [p. 61]

[*6 December 1830*]

The manner in which one of the "GOLD BIBLE" witnesses treats his wife, and how he uses "*weighty arguments,*" to bring her over to the faith according to JO SMITH, has come to hand, but as we understand a *legal* investigation may hereafter take place, we shall lay the article on the shelf for the present. In the interim however, we feel bound to give it as our humble opinion, that a *man* who will maltreat the wife of his bosom, under such circumstances, should be driven from the society of MEN.[28] [p. 53]

[*6 January 1831*]

GOLD BIBLE.—We have long been waiting, with considerable anxiety, to see some of our co[n]temporaries attempt to explain the immediate causes, which produced that anomoly in religion and literature, which has most strikingly excited the curiosity of our friends at a distance, generally known under the cognomen of the Book of Mormon, or the Gold Bible.

The few notices heretofore given in the public prints, are quite vague and uncertain, and throw but faint light on the subject. While some have evinced a spirit of rancor, without giving the *whys* and *wherefores*; others have attached an ominous consequence to this transaction, which may have a tendency to mislead the ignorant.

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27. See III.A.4, JOSHUA STAFFORD STATEMENT, 15 NOV 1833.

28. This refers to Martin Harris (see n. 24 above).

It is our intention, so far as in us lies, to give, in accordance with the wishes of our friend "Plain Truth," (whose communication will be found in this day's paper,)[29] a plain and unvarnished statement of facts, so far as they may come to our knowledge, which may, in our opinion, be considered as having any connection with the origin, rise, and progress of the book in question; so that our readers may not only judge of this, but of *some* other matters for themselves.

By way of introduction, and illustration, we shall introduce brief notices and sketches of the superstitions of the ancients—the pretended science of alchymy [alchemy], by which it was vainly supposed, that the baser metals might be transmuted into gold—of Mohomet (properly Mahommed) and other ancient impostures—legends, or traditions respecting hidden treasures, with the SPIRIT, to whom ignorance has formerly given them in charge—tale[s] of modern "money diggers," and other impostors—the Morristown Ghost,[30] Rogers,[31] Walters, Joanna Southcote,[32] Jemima Wilkinson, &c.

Our readers will perceive that we have an ample field before us;—how well we shall execute our task, time will determine—we shall publish only so much weekly as will not interfere with our variety. Postmaste[r]s and others, who can furnish us with interesting notices on any of the above subjects, shall receive a copy of our paper *gratis*. [p. 76]

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29. See below.

30. The "Morristown Ghost" refers to a confidence scheme perpetrated upon some credulous inhabitants of Morristown, New Jersey, by Ransford (or Rainsford) Rogers in 1788-89. Rogers, and an accomplice (a Mr. Goodenough), pretended to use "chymistry" and "soothsaying" to dispel guardian spirits from buried treasures. Rogers, who bilked large sums of money from the Morristown treasure seekers, was eventually exposed and taken into custody, but escaped and fled the state (Sherman 1905, 415-26). Rogers also similarly duped a number of citizens in Exeter, New Hampshire, prior to his arrival at Morristown (see Bell 1884, 411-14; also Dorson 1946, 181).

31. Ransford Rogers (see n. 30 above).

32. Joanna Southcott (c. 1750-1814) was an English prophetess from Devon. About 1792 she declared herself to be the woman of Revelation chapter 12. She published *A Warning* (1803) and *The Book of Wonders* (1813-14). Afterwards, she announced that she had given birth to a second Christ on 19 October 1814. But in December 1814 she fell into a coma and died from a brain tumor. As late as the early twentieth century, she still had followers who believed she would be raised from the dead (Magnusson 1990, 1374).

Farmington, Ont[ario] co. Jan. 1, 1831.

Mr. EDITOR—

I observe by the public prints, that this most clumsy of all impositions, known among us as Jo Smith's "Gold Bible," is beginning to excite curiosity abroad, from the novelty of its appearance, and the assurance of its advocates, who in imitation of too many of our religious sects, who have gone before them, very charitably (at least in this region) threaten all who have the hardihood to refuse to subscribe to their rhapsodies, with "dire damnation."

The two papers published in your village,[33] for reasons easily explained, decline at present, throwing any light on this subject. To you, and you alone, do we look for an expose of the principal facts, and characters, as connected with this singular busines[s]; I say singular, because it was hardly to be expected, that a *mummery* like the one in question, should have been gotten up at so late a period, and among a people, *professing* to be enlightened.

It is not from a persecuting spirit, that I solicit an exposure, for my maxim is, that "error is never dangerous, where truth is free to combat it," and that liberty of conscience in matters of religion, should be allowed to all. Among the bundle of papers herewith sent to you for inspection, you will find little else, than a dry statement of facts, without much reference to time or order; you will perceive that I have attempted to throw all the light I could upon the "money digging mania," which formerly pervaded this, and many

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33. Dale Morgan commented on this situation: "Presumably the *Wayne Sentinel* refrained from comment on the Book of Mormon because it had been responsible for printing it, while the Palmyra *Freeman,* being Anti-Masonic in its politics, may have been willing for the anti-Masonic content of the Book of Mormon to influence the public mind in any way it could" (J. P. Walker 1986, 400). However, Morgan incorrectly asserts that the Farmington resident referred to the *Freeman,* since this paper was short lived (1828-29), being followed by the *Lyons Countryman and Anti-Masonic Recorder* (which began its two years of publication on 26 January 1830). The Farmington resident (whose letter is dated 1 January 1831) was more likely referring to the *Western Spectator and Anti-Masonic Star* (1830-31), extant copies of which are extremely rare. The one issue (12 April 1831, vol. 1, no. 44) that I have examined makes no reference to Mormonism. This paper, edited by Luther Howard, merged in 1831 with Rochester's *Anti-Masonic Enquirer* and probably avoided dealing with the Book of Mormon for the reason Morgan stated. Howard was also the binder of the Book of Mormon. Abner Cole accused Howard of privately advocating the Book of Mormon (see above under 16 March 1830).

other countries, which eventuated in the discovery of Jo Smith's "Golden Treasure."

From your knowledge of ancient & modern history, by which you will be enabled to relieve the dryness of the subject, by bringing before the public parallel cases, there can be no doubt that much useful information may result from your labors. I shall from time to time, send you such information as I may collect on this piece of legerdemain.

Yours, &c.
PLAIN TRUTH.[34] [p. 77]

[*18 January 1831*]

GOLD BIBLE, NO. 2.

The page of history informs us, that from time immemorial, MAN has more or less been the dupe of superstitious error and imposition; so much so, that some writers in derision have called him "a religious animal," and it often happens that the more absurd the *dogma,* the more greedily will it be swallowed, and the more absurd or unnatural the *tenet,* the more eagerly will it be embraced. ...

Our present business, however, is not to discuss the tenets of the innumerable sects and denominations, of christians or pagans, which now cover the face of the habitable globe, but to throw some light on the "rise and progress" of a *sect,* (if they may be so called,) who profess to be governed by the *pseudo* prophet Jo Smith, junior, who in addition to the precepts contained in the "Book of Mormon," issues his *inspired* commands daily to his devoted followers, and no mandate of Mahomet was ever more implicitly obeyed.

Agreeable to the plan laid down in our last paper we shall commence, or in other words preface our subject by giving brief notices of some of the

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34. Based on this letter, Dale Morgan theorized that this Farmington correspondent had authored the series of six articles on the "Gold Bible" (J. P. Walker 1986, 369, n. 17). However, the author of the first article writes: "It is our intention, so far as in us lies, to give, in accordance with the wishes of our friend 'Plain Truth,' (whose communication will be found in this day's paper,) a plain and unvarnished statement of facts. ..." This tends to disprove Morgan's theory and assign authorship of the articles to Cole, who was responding to the Farmington correspondent's request for more information about Mormon origins. The correspondent's participation therefore went no farther than supplying Cole with a "bundle of papers," which I take to mean newspaper articles about the "money digging mania" generally.

most notorious impostors that have figured either in ancient or modern times, and connecting such other matters, as we may consider applicable to the subject, or interesting to our readers. We shall commence with the impostor of Mecca.

Jo Smith, as a military chiefta[i]n, or as a man of *natural* abilities, can bear no comparison with the author of the *Koran,* and it is only in their ignorance and impudence that a parallel can be found. ...[35] [p. 84]

[*1 February 1831*]

... Our first plan respecting the imposture of the "Book of Mormon," we have been induced to alter and instead of attempting, as was first proposed, to keep up something like a regular narrative, on the suggestion of many of our readers in this section of country, we conclude to publish *former* and *recent* events promiscuously, paying due attention to *time and place.*

GOLD BIBLE, NO. 3.

Jo Smith, junior, according to the best information we can obtain on this subject, was born in the State of Vermont. His father emigrated to this country (Ontario county, N.Y.) about the year 1815, and located his family in the village of Palmyra.[36] The age of this modern prophet is supposed to be about 24 years. In his person he is tall and slender—*thin favored*—having but little expression of countenance, other than that of dulness; his mental powers appear to be extremely limited, and from the small opportunity he has had at school, he made little or no proficiency, and it is asserted by one of his principle followers, (who also pretends to divine illuminations,) that Jo, even at this day is profoundly ignorant of the meaning of many of the words contained in the Book of Mormon.

Joseph Smith, senior, the father of the personage of whom we are now writing, had by misfortune or otherwise been reduced to extreme poverty before he migrated to Western New-York.[37] His family was large consisting of nine or ten children, among whom Jo junior was the third or fourth in

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35. Then follows a discussion of Mahomet.

36. Joseph Smith, Sr., likely migrated to Palmyra, New York, in the summer or fall of 1816, and Lucy and the children followed in the winter of 1816-17.

37. For Lucy Smith's description of her family's three years of successive crop failures in Norwich, Vermont, see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:33; see also introduction to II.B.16, SMITH FAMILY WARNING OUT OF NORWICH [VT], 27 MAR 1816.

succession. We have never been able to learn that any of the family were ever noted for much else than ignorance and stupidity, to which might be added, so far as it may respect the elder branch, a propensity to superstition and a fondness for every thing *marvelous*.

We have been credibly informed that the mother of the prophet, had connected herself with several religious societies before her present illumination[38]; this also was the case with other branches of the family, but how far the father of the prophet, ever advanced in these particulars, we are not precisely informed, it however appears quite certain that the prophet himself never made any serious pretentions to religion until his late pretended revelation.

We are not able to determine whether the elder Smith was ever concerned in money digging transactions previous to his emigration from Vermont, or not,[39] but it is a well authenticated fact that soon after his arrival here he evinced a firm belief in the existence of hidden treasures, and that this section of country abounded in them.[40]—He also revived, or in other words propagated the vulgar, yet popular belief that these treasures were held in charge by some *evil* spirit, which was supposed to be either the DEVIL himself, or some one of his most trusty favorites. This opinion however, did not originate by any means with Smith, for we find that the vulgar and ignorant from time immemorial, both in Europe and America, have entertained the same preposterous opinion.[41]

It may not be amiss in this place to mention that the *mania* of money digging soon began rapidly to diffuse itself through many parts of this country; men and women without distinction of age or sex became marvellous wise

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38. Lucy Smith's membership in the Western Presbyterian Church of Palmyra is documented (see III.L.20, PALMYRA [NY] PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH RECORDS, MAR 1830), but other possible affiliations are not.

39. See II.A.1, GREEN MOUNTAIN BOYS TO THOMAS C. SHARP, 15 FEB 1844; II.A.2, BARNES FRISBIE ACCOUNT, 1867; and II.A.3, DANIEL WOODWARD ACCOUNT, 187O.

40. Some of the Smiths' Manchester neighbors said they became aware of the Smiths' money digging in the area about 1820 (e.g., III.A.4, JOSHUA STAFFORD STATEMENT, 15 NOV 1833; III.A.9, PETER INGERSOLL STATEMENT, 2 DEC 1833, 232; III.A.13, WILLIAM STAFFORD STATEMENT, 8 DEC 1833, 237; III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 240; and III.A.15, HENRY HARRIS STATEMENT, CIRCA 1833, 251).

41. On the prevalence of treasure seeking, see Quinn 1987, 1-26; and R. W. Walker 1984.

in the occult sciences, many dreamed, and others saw visions disclosing to them, deep in the bowels of the earth, rich and shining treasures, and to facilitate those *mighty* mining operations, (money was usually if not always sought after in the night time,) divers devices and implements were invented, and although the *spirit* was [p. 92] always able to retain his precious charge, these discomfited as well as deluded beings, would on a succeeding night return to their toil, not in the least doubting that success would eventually attend their labors.

Mineral rods and [crystal?] balls, (as they were called by the impostor who made use of them,) were supposed to be infallible guides to these sources of wealth—*"peep stones"* or pebbles, taken promiscuously from the brook or field, were placed in a hat or other situation excluded from the light, when some *wizzard* or *witch* (for these performances were not confined to either sex) applied their eyes, and nearly starting [staring?] their [eye] balls from their sockets, declared they saw all the wonders of nature, including of course, ample stores of silver and gold.

It is more than probable that some of these deluded people, by having their imaginations heated to the highest pitch of excitement, and by straining their eyes until they were suffused with tears, might have, through the medium of some trifling emission of the ray of light, receive imperfect images on the *retina,* when their fancies could create the rest. Be this however as it may, people busied themselves in consulting these blind oracles, while the ground was nightly opened in various places and men who were too lazy or idle to labor for bread in the day time, displayed a zeal and persevereance in this business worthy of a better cause. [p. 93]

Waterloo, Jan. 26, 1830 [1831].

Mr. EDITOR—

Elder S[idney]. Rigdon[42] left this village on Monday morning last in the stage, for the "Holy Land," where all the "Gold Bible" converts, have recently received a *written* command from God, through Jo Smith, junior, to repair with all convenient speed after selling off the property.[43] This command was at first resisted by such as had property, (the brethren from the neighboring counties being all assembled by special summons,) but after a night of fasting, prayer and trial, they all consented to obey the holy messenger.[44]—Rigdon has for some

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42. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

43. Cf. LDS D&C 37 and 38:32.

44. John Whitmer said that after the reception of LDS D&C 38, "there were some divisions among the congregation, some would not receive

time past been arranging matters with Smith for the final departure of the *faithful* for the "far west." This man of many CREEDS, (Rigdon) appears to possess colloquial powers to a considerable degree, and before leaving this vicinity left us his *blessing*. He delivered a discourse at the Court House immediately preceding his departure, wherein he depicted in strong language, the want of "charity and brotherly love" among the prevailing sects and denominations of professing christians, and sorry I am to admit, that he had too much truth on his side with regard to this particular. After denouncing dreadful vengeance on the whole state of New-York, and this village in particular, and recommending to all such as wished to flee from "the wrath to come," to follow him beyond the "western waters," he took his leave. The *Prophet,* Spouse, and whole "holy family" (as they style themselves,) will follow Rigdon, so soon as their deluded or hypocritical followers, shall be able to dispose of what little real property they possess in this region; one farm (Whitmers) was sold a few days ago for $2,300.[45] Their first place of destination is understood to be a few miles west of Painesville, Ohio, (the present place of the Elder's residence)[46] which is just within the east bounds of this new land of promise, which extends from thence to the Pacific Ocean, embracing a territory of 1500 miles in extent, from north to south.

Yours respectfully,

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[*14 February 1831*]

GOLD BIBLE, NO. 4.

...[47] If an imposture, like the one we have so briefly noticed, could spring up in the great metropolis of England, and spread over a considerable portion of that kingdom, it is not surprising that one equally absurd, should have its origin in this neighborhood, where its dupes are not, or ever will be numerous.

In the commencement, the imposture of the "book of Mormon," had

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the above [revelation] as the word of the Lord: but that Joseph had invented it himself to deceive the people that in the end he might get gain" (VI.B.1, JOHN WHITMER HISTORY, 1831, 9).

45. A warranty deed, dated 1 April 1831, indicates that Peter Whitmer, Sr., and his wife Mary conveyed to Charles Stuart their 100-acre farm in Fayette, New York, for $2,200 (Deeds, Liber W, 318, Seneca County Courthouse, Waterloo, New York, cited in Porter 1971, 312).

46. Sidney Rigdon lived in Mentor, Ohio, near Painesville.

47. Cole's discussion of Joanna Southcott (see n. 32 above) has been deleted.

no regular plan or features. At a time when the money digging ardor was somewhat abated, the elder Smith declared that his son Jo had seen the *spirit,* (which he then described as a little old man with a long beard,) and was informed that he (Jo) under *certain* circumstances, eventually should obtain great treasures, and that in due time he (the spirit) would furnish him (Jo) with a book, which would give an account of the Ancient inhabitants (antideluvians,) of this country, and where they had deposited their substance, consisting of costly furniture, &c. at the approach of the great deluge, which had ever since that time remained secure in his (the spirits) charge, in large and spacious *chambers,* in sundry places in this vicinity,[48] and these tidings corresponded precisely with revelations made to, and predictions made by the elder Smith, a number of years before.[49]

The time at length arrived, when young Jo was to receive the book from the hand of the spirit, and he repaired accordingly, alone, and in the night time to the woods in the rear of his father's house (in the town of Manchester about two miles south of this village) and met the spirit as had been appointed. This rogue of a spirit who had bafled all the united efforts of the money diggers, (although they had tried many devices to gain his favor, and at one time sacrificed a barn yard fowl,) intended it would seem to play our prophet a similar trick on this occasion; for no sooner had he delivered the book according to promise, than he made a most desperate attempt, to regain its possession. Our prophet however, like a lad of true metal, stuck to his prize, and attempted to gain his father's dwelling, which it appears, was near at hand. The father being alarmed at the long absence of his son, and probably fearing some trick of the spirit, having known him for many years;

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48. Cole's claim that Joseph Smith anticipated the discovery of a book containing the locations of ancient treasures is supported by Parley Chase, who reported that "when Smith first told of getting the book of plates he said it would tell him how to get hidden treasures in the earth" (III.J.11, PARLEY CHASE TO [JAMES T. COBB?], 3 APR 1879). Cole's mention of "costly furniture" is intriguing in light of his ownership of the hill on Manchester Lot 2 (see introduction). Prior to digging a tunnel in the hill, Joseph Jr., according to Lorenzo Saunders, saw in his stone "a man sitting in a gold chair" (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 7). Sylvia Walker, apparently describing the same cave, said that Smith reportedly "claimed to receive a revelation to dig forty feet into a hill ... where he would find a cave that contained gold furniture, chairs and table" (III.D.2, SYLVIA WALKER STATEMENT, 20 MAR 1885).

49. A possible reference to the dream visions of Joseph Smith, Sr., which Lucy Smith attempted to record in her 1845 History.

sallied forth in quest of the youthful adventurer. He had not however, proceeded far before he fell in with the object of his kind solicitude who appeared to be in the greatest peril. The spirit had become exasperated at the stubborn conduct of the young prophet, in wishing to keep possession of the book, and out of *sheer* spite, raised a whirlwind, which was at that particular juncture, throwing trunks and limbs of trees, about their ears, besides the "elfish sprite" had belabored Jo soundly with blows,—had felled him once to the ground, and bruised him severely in the side. The rescue however, was timely, Jo retained his treasure, and returned to the house with his father, much fatigued and injured. This tale in substance, was told at the time the event was *said* to have happened by both father and son, and is well recollected by many of our citizens.[50] It will be borne in mind that no *divine* interposition had been *dreamed* of at the period. [p. 101]

[*28 February 1831*]

GOLD BIBLE, NO. 5.

Every impostor since the creation, has owed his success to the ignorance of the people, and the propensity inherent in their natures, to follow every thing absurd or ridiculous. ...[51]

It is well known that Jo Smith never pretended to have any communion with angels, until a long period after the *pretended* finding of his book, and that the juggling of himself or father, went no further than the pretended faculty of seeing wonders in a "peep stone," and the occasional interview with the spirit, supposed to have the custody of hidden treasures; and it is also equally well known, that a vagabond fortune-teller by the name of Walters, who then resided in the town of Sodus, and was once committed to the jail of this county for *juggling*,[52] was the constant companion and bosom friend of these money digging impostors.

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50. Cole's account more accurately describes the events of several days following Smith's removal of the plates from the hill. Smith claimed that in the early morning hours of 22 September 1827 he took the plates from the hill and hid them in the woods near his father's house. Several days later, fearing his enemies were about to discover the location of the plates, Smith went into the woods to retrieve the plates. On his way home he claimed he was attacked several times and injured his thumb (see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:63-66).

51. Then follows a brief description of Mahomet.

52. The available records for either Wayne County or Sodus township are unable to confirm this claim.

There remains but little doubt, in the minds of those at all acquainted with these transactions, that Walters, who was sometimes called the conjurer, and was paid three dollars per day for his services by the money diggers in this neighborhood, first suggested to Smith the idea of finding a book. Walters, the better to carry on his own deception with those ignorant & deluded people who employed him, had procured an old copy of Cicero's Orations, in the latin language, out of which he read long and loud to his credulous hearers, uttering at the same time an unintelligible jargon, which he would afterwards pretend to interpret, and explain, as a record of the former inhabitants of America, and a particular account of the numerous situations where they had deposited their treasures previous to their final extirpation.

So far did this impostor carry this diabolical farce, that not long previous to the pretended discovery of the "Book of Mormon," Walters assembled his nightly band of money diggers in the town of Manchester, at a point designated in his magical book, and drawing a circle around the laborers, with the point of an old rusty sword, and using sundry other incantations, for the purpose of propitiating the spirit, absolutely sacrificed a fowl, ("*Rooster,*") in the presence of his awe-stricken companions, to the foul spirit, whom ignorance had created, the guardian of hidden wealth; and after *digging* until day-light, his deluded employers retired to their several habitations, fatigued and disappointed.

If the critical reader will examine the "Book of Mormon," he will directly perceive, that in many instances, the style of the Bible, from which it is chiefly copied, has been entirely altered for the worse. In many instances it has been copied *upwards,* without reference to chapter or verse, (taking Jeremiah for an example) and that the old and new Testament, have been promiscuously intermingled, with the simple alteration of names, &c. with some interpolations, which may easily be discovered, by the want of grammatical arrangement.

How far Smith, Cowdery, or any of their worthy compeers, were conversant with the writings, or lives of Mahomet and other impostors, will be discussed hereafter. [p. 109]

[*9 March 1831*]

MORMONISM.—Our Waterloo correspondent informs us, that two of the most responsible *Mormonites,* as it respects property, in that vicinity, have *demurred* to the divine command, through Jo Smith, requiring them to sell their property and put it into the common *fund,*[53] and repair with all

53. The identity of the two men of property who apostatized and refused to sell out and move to Ohio is uncertain. One of the men, a "Mr. B." according to the Waterloo correspondent, might have been Phillip Bur-

convenient speed to the New Jerusalem, lately located by Cowdry somewhere in the western region. A requisition of *twelve hundred* dollars, in cash, it is said, was made upon one of these gentlemen, (Mr. B.)—"the Lord having need of it." This request was promptly refused by the gentleman, who, at the same time informed the prophet that he would rather risque his soul as it was, (having been dipt) than trust his money or property in the hands of such agents as were applying for it. ...[54] [p. 116]

[*19 March 1831*]

GOLD BIBLE, NO. 6.

There appears to be a great discrepancy, in the stories told by the famous three witnesses to the Gold Bible; and these *pious* reprobates, individually, frequently give different versions of the same transaction. In the first place, it was roundly asserted that the plates on which Mormon wrote his history, (in the *reformed* Egyptian language) were of gold, and hence its name; gentlemen in this vicinity were called on to estimate its value from its weight, (something more than 20 lbs. [pounds]) Smith and Harris gave out that no mortal save Jo could look upon it and live; and Harris declares, that when he acted as *amanuenses,* and wrote the translation, as Smith dictated, such was his fear of the Divine displeasure, that a screen (sheet) was suspended between the prophet and himself.[55]

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roughs of Fayette. A letter, probably authored by Cole, named "Chamberlain and Burrows" (see III.I.3, PALMYRA RESIDENTS TO *PAINESVILLE* [OH] *TELEGRAPH,* 12 MAR 1831). Lee Yost reported that "quite a number of men pretty well off refused to give their Property to the mormons So did ... <not> become members[.] I recolect Several[.] Oran Chamberlain owning property between Waterloo and Seneca Falls was one[.] Philip Burrows having a nice Farm in what was called the Burgh" (VI.E.2, LEE YOST TO DIEDRICH WILLERS, 18 MAY 1897; also Porter 1971, 262; D&C 30:10). The revelation on consecration had been given in February 1831 (BofC XLIV:1-57; cf. LDS D&C 42:1-72). An editor of the *Lockport Balance* in Niagara County, New York, noted that the Saints who passed through on their way west had to convert their property to common stock (see *Philadelphia Album,* 18 June 1831, 198, which reprinted the item from the *Lockport Balance,* cited in M. Hill 1968, 366).

54. Remainder of article deals with events in Ohio.

55. Martin Harris also told others about the curtain or blanket between himself and Smith (III.F.1, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH JOHN A. CLARK, 1827 & 1828; V.D.2, CHARLES ANTHON TO E. D. HOWE, 17 FEB 1834; and V.D.3, CHARLES ANTHON TO THOMAS WINTHROP COIT, 3 APR 1841, 235; see also III.H.1, JOHN

Whitmar's description of the Book of Mormon, differs entirely from that given by Harris; both of whom it would seem, have been of late permitted, not only to see and handle it, but to examine its contents. Whitmar relates that he was led by Smith into an open field, on his father's farm near Waterloo, when they found the book lying on the ground; Smith took it up and requested him to examine it, which he did for the space of half an hour or more, when he returned it to Smith, who placed it in its former position, alledging that the book was in the custody of *another,* intimating that some Divine agent would have it in safe keeping.[56]

This *witness* describes the book as being something like 8 inches square; (our informant did not recollect precisely,) the leaves were plates of metal of a *whitish yellow* color, and of the thickness of tin plate; the back was secured with three small rings of the same metal, passing through each leaf in succession;—that the leaves were divided equi-distant, between the back & edge, by cutting the plates in two parts, and united again with *solder,* so that the front might be opened, as it were by a hinge, while the back part remained stationary and immoveable, and in this manner remained to him and the other witnesses a *sealed book,* which would not be revealed for ages to come, and that even the prophet himself was not as yet permitted to understand. On opening that portion of the book which was not secured by the *seals,* he discovered inscribed on the aforesaid plates, divers and wonderful *characters*; some of them large and some small, but beyond the wisdom of man to understand without supernatural aid.[57]

Some of the other apostles give somewhat similar accounts, but varying in many particulars, according to their various powers of description.—Harris however, gives the lie to a very important part of Whitmar's relation, and

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H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1877).

56. Cole's account of Whitmer's seeing the plates is unusual since it lacks mention of an angel or vision experience characteristic of Whitmer's own telling of the event (e.g., VI.G.1, TESTIMONY OF THREE WITNESSES, JUN 1829; VI.A.7, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH ORSON PRATT AND JOSEPH F. SMITH, 7-8 SEP 1878; VI.A.12, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH *KANSAS CITY JOURNAL,* 1 JUN 1881; and VI.A.25, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH JAMES HENRY MOYLE, 28 JUN 1885).

57. David Whitmer's description of the plates given in later years varies from the present account (see VI.A.6, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH P. WILHELM POULSON, CIRCA APR 1878; and VI.A.30, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH M. J. HUBBLE, NOV 1886).

declares that the leaves or pages of the book are not cut, and a part of them sealed, but that it opens like any other book, from the edge to the back, the rings operating in the place of common binding.[58]

As these details, under different modifications, (for it must be borne in mind, that these Mormonites have given versions of the same particulars,) are pretty well understood in this vicinity, we shall give our distant readers, but small portions at a time. We have on hand a new edition of the prophet's vision, at the time the Gold Bible was revealed to him by the Spirit, and the subsequent transactions, as related by JO'S father and his elder brother;—also sundry money digging scenes in which the Smiths acted conspicuous parts, all of which will be given to the public in due time.[59] ... [p. 126]

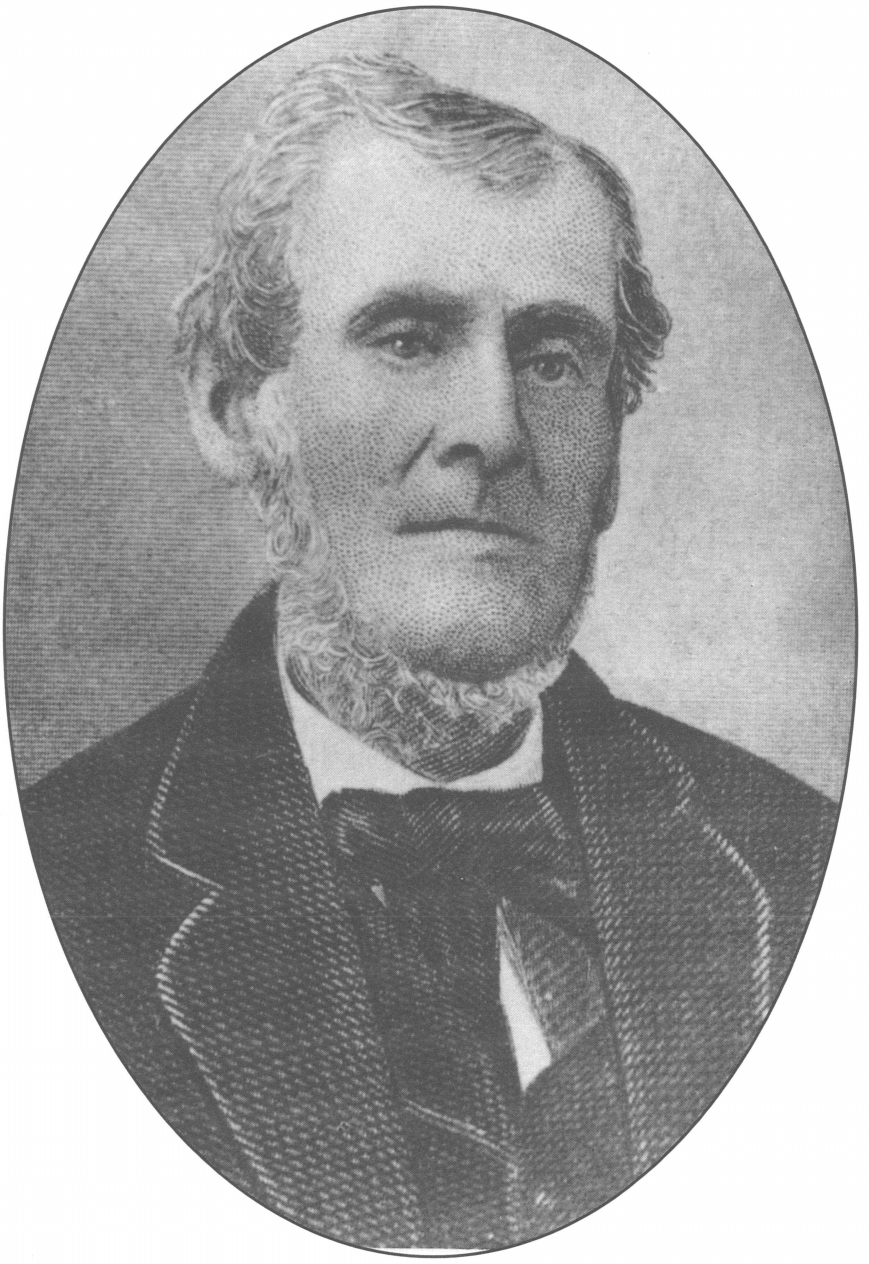
58. Cf. III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 165.

59. These promised accounts were never given since apparently no other numbers of the paper were issued.

F.

Martin Harris

COLLECTION



Martin Harris, 1871. Engraving by H. B. Hall & Son for October 1883 *Contributor*, based on 1871 photograph of Martin Harris by C. R. Savage. Courtesy Library-Archives, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, The Auditorium, Independence, Missouri.

INTRODUCTION TO MARTIN HARRIS COLLECTION

Martin Harris (1783-1875) was born at Easttown, Saratoga County, New York. In 1792 he moved to Palmyra, New York, where he became a respected farmer and substantial landowner. In 1808 he married his first cousin, Lucy Harris, who bore him three children: Duty L. (1812-15); George W. (c. 1814-64); and Lucy (c. 1816-41).

Harris was a religious visionary and seeker, who was inspired in 1818 to remain independent from all religious denominations (III.F.15, MARTIN HARRIS TESTIMONY, 4 SEP 1870; Vogel 1988, chaps. 1 and 2). He was intensely interested in the religious debates of his time, particularly those dealing with the trinity and the duration of future punishment. While Harris had attended various denominations in his community, he was at the time of his conversion to Mormonism theologically oriented toward Universalism, believing in a temporary hell and the ultimate salvation of all humankind (D&C 19).

In an 1859 interview, Harris said that in the summer of 1826 he had a "revelation" that "God had a work for me to do" (III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 163). When about the beginning of October 1827 Harris first learned from his brother Preserved of Joseph Smith's discovery of gold plates, he was naturally curious. Soon after, Smith told Harris that he had seen him in his "spectacles" and that God had called him to assist in translating the plates (ibid., 169). Thereafter Harris became a patron of Smith's efforts to translate and publish the Book of Mormon.

In December 1827 Harris gave Smith $50 to help him move to Harmony, Pennsylvania. Sometime in February 1828 he went to Harmony and picked up a copy of Book of Mormon characters Smith had prepared. Then visiting a number of cities, he solicited the opinion of the learned, including Columbia University's classics scholar Charles Anthon. Exactly what transpired between the two men is not clear, but Harris believed the encounter had fulfilled the prediction in Isaiah 29:11, which declares that the learned will be unable to read the "words of a book that is sealed."

Early versions of the Anthon/Harris encounter emphasize Anthon's inability to read the characters as a fulfillment of Isaiah (III.F.1, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH JOHN A. CLARK, 1827 & 1828; III.F.2, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH *ROCHESTER* [NY] *GEM,* CIRCA JUN 1829; I.A.7, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1832, 5; III.H.10,

JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 5). According to Oliver Cowdery's 1835 History, the angel told Smith in 1823 that the plates "cannot be interpreted by the learning of this generation" (III.G.13, OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, OCT 1835, 198). But Joseph Smith's 1839 History and late interviews of Harris claim that Anthon pronounced the translation correct and that Isaiah was fulfilled when Anthon said, "I cannot read a sealed book," when told a portion of the plates were literally sealed (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 9; III.F.21, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH WILLIAM PILKINGTON, 1874-1875; III.F.13, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH EDWARD STEVENSON, 1870; III.F.26, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH SIMON SMITH, 5 JUL 1875; and III.F.22, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH THOMAS GODFREY, MAY 1875).

E. D. Howe had solicited Anthon's statement in 1834 because Mormons were claiming he had pronounced the Book of Mormon characters true "reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics," not because they were claiming Anthon had verified Smith's ability to translate. In response, Howe published Anthon's letter in which he denied having said that the characters Harris had shown him in 1828 represented a true language and expressed his opinion that Smith had simply altered characters copied from some book containing various alphabets (V.D.2, CHARLES ANTHON TO E. D. HOWE, 17 FEB 1834). Regardless of what actually transpired, Harris returned from the East still believing in Smith's gift (Kimball 1970, 337-38).

In April 1828 Harris went to Harmony to serve as Smith's scribe in translating the plates, and the following June convinced Smith to let him take a portion of the translation manuscript back to Palmyra. The manuscript was stolen, evidently by Harris's disapproving wife (see III.L.16, BOOK OF MORMON PREFACE, 1829). Thereafter Harris was excluded from the translation of the Book of Mormon, but was still expected to contribute to its printing. In August 1829 he mortgaged his farm and later sold it for the printing of the Book of Mormon (III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829).

In late June 1829 Harris had a visionary experience and became one of three special witnesses to view the Book of Mormon plates. The collective statement of the three witnesses declares that "an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon" (VI.G.1, TESTIMONY OF THREE WITNESSES, JUN 1829). However, Harris's experience is more complicated than this declaration implies. First, the three witnesses did not experience the vision together, for Harris's experience occurred separate

from David Whitmer's and Oliver Cowdery's (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 24-25). Hence Harris's testimony should be treated as an independent statement lacking the verification of the simultaneous experience of the other witnesses implied in the Testimony of Three Witnesses.

Second, despite the apparent claim in the Testimony that the plates were seen with "our eyes," Harris seems to have repeatedly admitted the internal, subjective nature of his visionary experience. Pomeroy Tucker, foreman in Grandin's printing office, said Harris "used to practice a good deal of his characteristic jargon about 'seeing with the spiritual eye,' and the like" (III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 71). "Martin was in the office when I finished setting up the testimony of the three witnesses," John H. Gilbert recalled. "Martin, did you see those plates with your naked eyes?" Gilbert asked. "Martin looked down for an instant, raised his eyes up, and said, 'No, I saw them with a spir[i]tual eye'" (III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 5; see also III.H.3, JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 16 MAR 1879; III.H.11, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1893). Another Palmyra resident reportedly pressed Harris about his testimony and was told "I saw them with the eye of faith" (III.F.1, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH JOHN A. CLARK, 1827 & 1828). Palmyra Presbyterian minister Jesse Townsend reported that Harris claimed to have seen the plates with "spiritual eyes" (III.I.6, JESSE TOWNSEND TO PHINEAS STILES, 24 DEC 1833, 290).

Harris continued to affirm the visionary nature of his experience apparently throughout his life. According to Stephen Burnett, Harris declared to a congregation in Ohio in 1838 that "he never saw the plates with his natural eyes[,] only in vision or imagination" (III.F.7, STEPHEN BURNETT TO LYMAN E. JOHNSON, 15 APR 1838). Harris told Anthony Metcalf that he saw the angel and the plates in a "visionary or entranced state" (III.F.20, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH ANTHONY METCALF, 1876, 70-71). Reuben P. Harmon, a neighbor of Harris in Kirtland, Ohio, said that Harris "never claimed to have seen them [plates] with his natural eyes, only spiritual vision" (III.F.26, REUBEN P. HARMON STATEMENT, CIRCA 1885).

Despite the skepticism of outsiders, Harris was only stating what Smith's revelations had promised. In March 1829, about three months before his vision, Harris was instructed that he should declare to the world that "I have seen them [plates], for they have been shown unto me by the power of God and not of man" (LDS D&C 5:25). Another revelation, dictated in June 1829, promised Harris, Whitmer, and Cowdery they would see the plates and declared that "it is by your faith that you shall obtain a view of them. ... And

after that you have obtained faith, and have seen them with your eyes, you shall testify of them, by the power of God" (LDS D&C 17:2-3; also Eth. 5:3). The Testimony itself states that the plates "have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man."

If Harris admitted the metaphysical nature of his viewing of the plates, he stated it in terms commonly understood for visionary experiences. Eighteenth-century visionary Emanuel Swedenborg, for example, said about his vision of the spirits on the planet Mercury, "what I saw on that earth, was not seen with the eyes of my body, but with the eyes of my spirit" (Swedenborg 1951, 475). It was also the language of the early American revivalists. Deeply affected by the New England revivals in the eighteenth century, Nathan Cole fell into a spiritual state in which "[i]t seemed as if I really saw the gate of heaven by an Eye of faith ... as plain as ever I saw any thing with my bodily eyes in my life" (Shea 1968, 216). The Reverend Charles Giles, in giving an account of his religious experience, said, "I thought that I saw the glorious angel," which "passed before the eye of my mind," and believed that it "might have been the effect of some supernatural agency" (G. Peck 1860, 186). Joseph Smith set the example among the Mormons. Moses, according to a Smith revelation, saw God with "my spiritual eyes, for my natural eyes could not have beheld" (Moses 1:11; also 6:36; LDS D&C 58:3; 76:12, 19).

In later years, perhaps sensitive to anti-Mormon emphasis on the visionary nature of Harris's experience, Mormons began to introduce physical elements into their accounts of Harris's vision. Ole A. Jensen in about 1923 reported Harris saying he had seen the plates with his "natural eyes" (III.F.24, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH OLE A. JENSEN, JUL 1875). Simon Smith stated that Harris "both saw and handled the plates," but failed to state that this had happened on separate occasions (III.F.26, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH SIMON SMITH, 5 JUL 1875). Harris frequently testified that he had held or hefted the plates when they were in a box or covered with a cloth (III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 166, 169; and III.F.7, STEPHEN BURNETT TO LYMAN E. JOHNSON, 15 APR 1838). David B. Dille's 1853 statement gives the impression that in addition to seeing the plates in vision Harris had also seen and physically handled them uncovered on another occasion (III.F.9, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH DAVID B. DILLE, 1853).

E. D. Howe, however, reported in 1834 that Harris "does not pretend that he ever saw the wonderful plates but once" (III.F.6, E. D. HOWE ON MARTIN HARRIS, 1834, 14). Theodore Farley, who had heard Harris's

testimony on several occasions, tried to correct the error of an unnamed woman who "testified that Martin Harris told her ... that he handled the plates of the Book of Mormon when the angel came down from Heaven and showed them." To which Farley responded, "Martin Harris never made that statement in our house that I heard of, but he did say that he saw in broad day light the angel come down from Heaven with those records, and he stood beside him. ... What Martin Harris had seen is what has been testified to in the Book [of Mormon]" ("Talk given by Theodore Farley, Sr., at Priesthood Session of Sharon Stake Quarterly Conference, March 25, 1940," 3, typescript, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah).

Harris's experience as a Book of Mormon witness was not an isolated event in his life. He told Joel Tiffany that he received revelations about Mormonism even before his vision of the plates. Harris said Smith once expressed concern that Harris would not believe without seeing the plates, to which Harris responded: "Joseph, I know all about it. The Lord has showed to me ten times more about it than you know" (III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 166).

Friends and acquaintances of Harris confirm his propensity for visionary experiences. According to John A. Clark, Harris "had always been a firm believer in dreams, and visions, and supernatural appearances, such as apparitions and ghosts, and therefore was a fit subject for such men as Smith and his colleagues to operate upon" (III.F.1, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH JOHN A. CLARK, 1827 & 1828). Jesse Townsend found Harris to be a "visionary fanatic" (III.I.6, JESSE TOWNSEND TO PHINEAS STILES, 24 DEC 1833, 289), while publisher Pomeroy Tucker remembered that Harris was given to a "belief in dreams, ghosts, hobgoblins, 'special provinces,' terrestrial visits of angels, [and] the interposition of 'devils' to afflict sinful men" (III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 50). A more sympathetic description of Harris comes from Lorenzo Saunders, who said "Martin was a good citizen ... a man that would do just as he agreed with you. But, he was a great man for seeing spooks" (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884). Another sympathetic acquaintance, William Hyde, said he could only "speak well of him," but remarked that "on religious subjects I thought him slightly demented" (III.J.23, WILLIAM HYDE INTERVIEWS, 1888). Several unidentified acquaintances of Harris commented in 1841 as follows: "We have ever regarded Mr. Harris as an honest man. ... Though illiterate and naturally of a superstitious turn of mind, he had long sustained an irreproachable character for probity" (*Rochester Daily Democrat* 9 [23 June 1841]: 2).

John A. Clark gave a specific example of Harris's visionary claims,

which Harris said occurred before his June 1829 experience. According to Clark, "[Harris] told a gentleman in Palmyra, after one of his excursions to Pennsylvania, while the translation of the Book of Mormon was going on, that on the way he met the Lord Jesus Christ, who walked along by the side of him in the shape of a deer for two or three miles, talking with him as familiarly as one man talks with another" (III.F.1, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH JOHN A. CLARK, 1827 & 1828; cf. *Guernsey Times,* 16 April 1831; *American Friend and Marietta Gazette,* 30 April 1831). Albert Chandler said Harris told him that "he saw the devil, in all his hideousness, on the road, just before dark, near his farm, a little north of Palmyra" (III.J.28, ALBERT CHANDLER TO WILLIAM LINN, 22 DEC 1898; see also III.J.15, STEPHEN S. HARDING TO THOMAS GREGG, FEB 1882, 45). Such testimony must be considered if we are to fully understand the man who signed the Testimony of Three Witnesses.

Regardless of the nature of Harris's visionary experience with the plates, Harris believed in the book's verity. His experience apparently gave him the necessary proof he sought, and he was baptized by Oliver Cowdery on 6 April 1830.

Prior to the 9 June 1830 conference in Fayette, New York, Harris had been ordained a priest (VI.G.2, FAR WEST RECORD, 9 JUN 1830, 26 SEP 1830 & 2 JAN 1831). Following his removal to Kirtland, Ohio, in May 1831, he was ordained a high priest and served on the high council. After the death of his first wife, Lucy, who remained in Palmyra, Harris married Caroline Young in 1837. Together they parented five children. Harris was excommunicated in December 1837, but was rebaptized in 1840 and again in November 1842. He remained in Kirtland, never gathered with the main body of the church in Nauvoo, and failed to follow Brigham Young and the church to Utah. After Joseph Smith's death in 1844, Harris apparently went through a period of spiritual wandering. For a time he affiliated with James Strang and even served a mission for that group in England in 1846. In 1847 he joined William E. McLellin in organizing a new church, and in 1858 was briefly affiliated with William Smith.

In 1856 Harris's wife left him to gather with the Mormons in Utah. Harris remained in Kirtland and, as caretaker of the temple, gave tours to interested visitors. In 1870 Edward Stevenson helped move Harris to Utah, where he was rebaptized and soon after settled in Cache County. Harris died on 10 July 1875 at Clarkston, Cache County, Utah (on Harris, see James 1983; Jessee 1989, 489, 490; L. Cook 1981, 9; R. L. Anderson 1981, 95-105; R. W. Walker 1986).

The following collection brings together documents that record in-

stances in which Martin Harris either reminisced about early Mormon history or reaffirmed his testimony of the Book of Mormon. When possible, the interviews are presented in the order of occurrence; otherwise the date of production is followed.

1.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH JOHN A. CLARK, 1827 & 1828

1. John A. Clark to Dear Brethren, 24 August 1840, *The Episcopal Recorder* (Philadelphia) 18 (5 September 1840): 94. Reprinted in John A. Clark, *Gleanings By the Way* (Philadelphia: W. J. & J. K. Simon, 1842), 217, 222-31; E. G. Lee, *The Mormons, or, Knavery Exposed* (Philadelphia: [E. G. Lee], 1841), 8-12; *The Visitor, or Monthly Instructor, for 1841* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1841), 61-64; and *Wayne Sentinel,* 6 January 1841.

2. John A. Clark to Dear Brethren, 31 August 1840, *The Episcopal Recorder* (Philadelphia) 18 (12 September 1840): 98-99. Reprinted in John A. Clark, *Gleanings By the Way* (Philadelphia: W. J. & J. K. Simon, 1842), 256-58; *The Visitor, or Monthly Instructor, for 1841* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1841), 237-39.

EDITORIAL NOTE

John A. Clark (?-1843) was elected pastor of Palmyra's Zion's Episcopal Church in 1824, but in 1826 was compelled by "severe domestic affliction" to resign (McIntosh 1877, 110, 148). Clark was still living in Palmyra in 1827 and 1828 when Martin Harris came to his home to announce Joseph Smith's discovery of gold plates and exhibit a transcription of characters said to have been copied from the ancient record. Clark said that "very soon" after his last interview with Harris, and before publication of the Book of Mormon in March 1830, he "removed to another field of labour." He therefore does not appear in the 1830 census of Palmyra. By 1840 Clark had become one of the editors of the *Episcopal Recorder* and rector of St. Andrew's Church in Philadelphia. He evidently died at Philadelphia.

Clark had returned from visiting friends in Palmyra in August 1840, when he began writing a series of letters to the *Episcopal Recorder* in Philadelphia "detailing some facts connected with the rise and origin of Mormonism" (J. Clark 1842, 216). Of the ten letters Clark published, only the last five deal with Mormonism. In two of the letters (Nos. 6 and 7), dated 24 and 31 August 1840, Fairfield, Pennsylvania, Clark included information about Martin Harris obtained from his personal interviews with him and

other Palmyra residents.

[*1. Letter, 24 August 1840*]

FAIRFIELD, August 24th, 1840.[1]

Dear Brethren,—In my last I promised to give you some account of the rise and origin of the Mormon delusion; and remarked that in the town of Manchester, near the village of Palmyra, might still be seen an excavation in the side of a hill, from whence, according to the assertion of the Mormon prophet, the metallic plates, sometimes called THE GOLDEN BIBLE, were disinterred.[2] ...[3]

It is time that I should acquaint you with some facts that came to my personal knowledge full thirteen years ago, connected with the rise of this imposture.

It was early in the autumn of 1827[4] that Martin Harris called at my house in Palmyra, one morning about sun-rise. His whole appearance indicated more than usual excitement, and he had scarcely passed the threshold of my dwelling, before he inquired whether he could see me

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1. Clark's reprinting dates this first letter differently: "*Palmyra, Aug. 24th [1840]*" (J. Clark 1842, 216).

2. According to Lorenzo Saunders, he and others went to the hill to find the place from which Smith could have taken the plates, but found no disturbance of the earth except "a large hole where the money diggers had dug a year or two before" (III.J.20, LORENZO SAUNDERS TO THOMAS GREGG, 28 JAN 1885). It is likely that Clark saw this hole.

3. Clark's discussion of prophets Jemima Wilkinson, Robert Mathews, and Emanuel Swedenborg is here deleted.

4. This date is problematic. Clark claimed to have had two interviews with Harris: one before Harris visited Charles Anthon in February 1828, the other after. According to Clark, Harris displayed a copy of the Book of Mormon characters during his first visit, although Harris did not obtain the transcription until February 1828 (I.A.7, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1832, 5; I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 9). It is possible that Clark confuses elements from the second interview with the first. Harris may have visited Clark in the fall of 1827, as he did Egbert B. Grandin and John H. Gilbert (III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 4), relating what he knew about Smith's discovery of the plates and "spectacles." Harris had just learned about the matter from his brother Preserved and others in Palmyra and it was some days before he could interview Smith himself (III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 167-68), which might partly account for the garbled nature of Clark's account.

alone, remarking that he had a matter to communicate that he wished to be strictly confidential. Previous to this, I had but very slight acquaintance with Mr. Harris. He had occasionally attended divine service in our church. I had heard him spoken of as a farmer in comfortable circumstances, residing in the country a short distance from the village, and distinguished by certain peculiarities of character. He had been, if I mistake not, at one period a member of the Methodist Church, and subsequently had identified himself with the Universalists.[5] At this time, however, in his religious views he seemed to be floating upon the sea of uncertainty. He had evidently quite an extensive knowledge of the Scriptures, and possessed a manifest disputatious turn of mind. As I subsequently learned, Mr. Harris had always been a firm believer in dreams, and visions, and supernatural appearances, such as apparitions and ghosts, and therefore was a fit subject for such men as Smith and his colleagues to operate upon. On the occasion just referred to, I invited him to accompany me to my study, where, after having closed the door, he began to draw a package out of his pocket with great and manifest caution. Suddenly, however, he stopped, and wished to know if there was any possibility of our being interrupted or overheard? When answered in the negative, he proceeded to remark, that he reposed great confidence in me as a minister of Jesus Christ, and that what he had now to communicate he wished me to regard as strictly confidential. He said he verily believed that an important epoch had arrived—that a great flood of light was about to burst upon the world, and that the scene of divine manifestation was to be immediately around us. In explanation of what he meant, he then proceeded to remark that a GOLDEN BIBLE had recently been dug from the earth, where it had been deposited for thousands of years, and that this would be found to contain such disclosures as would settle all religious controversies and speedily bring on the glorious millennium. That this mysterious book, which no human eye of the present generation had yet seen, was in the possession of Joseph Smith, Jr., ordinarily known in the neighborhood under the more familiar designation of *Jo Smith*: that there had been a revelation made to him by which he had discovered this sacred deposit, and two transparent

5. There is no evidence which formally connects Harris with either the Methodist church or the Universalists (cf. III.A.5, G. W. STODDARD STATEMENT, 28 NOV 1833). Harris said he was instructed by the spirit in 1818 not to join any church (III.F.15, MARTIN HARRIS TESTIMONY, 4 SEP 1870).

stones, through which, as a sort of spectacles, he could read the Bible, although the box or ark that contained it, had not yet been opened; and that by looking through those mysterious stones, he had transcribed from one of the leaves of this book, the characters which Harris had so carefully wrapped in the package which he was drawing from his pocket.[6] The whole thing appeared to me so ludicrous and puerile, that I could not refrain from telling Mr. Harris, that I believed it a mere hoax got up to practice upon his credulity, or an artifice to extort from him money; for I had already, in the course of the conversation, learned that he had advanced some twenty-five dollars to Jo Smith as a sort of premium for sharing with him in the glories and profits of this new revelation.[7] For at this time, his mind seemed to be quite as intent upon the pecuniary advantage that would arise from the possession of the plates of solid gold of which this book was composed, as upon the spiritual light it would diffuse over the world.[8] My intimations to him, in reference to the possible imposition that was being practiced upon him, however, were indignantly repelled. He then went on to relate the particulars in regard to the discovery and possession of this marvellous book. As far as I can now recollect, the following was an outline of the narrative which he then communicated to me, and subsequently to scores of people in the village, from some of whom in my late visit to Palmyra, I have been able to recall several particulars that had quite glided from my memory.

Before I proceed to Martin's narrative, however, I would remark in passing, that Jo Smith, who has since been the chief prophet of the Mormons, and was one of the most prominent ostensible actors in the first scenes of this drama, belonged to a very shiftless family near Palmyra. They lived a sort of

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6. Joseph Smith said he prepared transcriptions of the characters from the plates after his move to Harmony, Pennsylvania, sometime between December 1827 and February 1828 (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 9; also V.E.2, BOOK OF MORMON CHARACTERS, DEC 1827-FEB 1828).

7. Probably a reference to the $50 Harris gave Smith to help him move to Harmony, Pennsylvania (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 9; III.I.6, JESSE TOWNSEND TO PHINEAS STILES, 24 DEC 1833, 289; I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:73; and III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 246).

8. Harris's monetary interest in the Book of Mormon is also stated in III.A.6, ABIGAIL HARRIS STATEMENT, 28 NOV 1833; and III.A.7, LUCY HARRIS STATEMENT, 29 NOV 1833.

vagrant life, and were principally known as *money-diggers*. Jo from a boy appeared dull and utterly destitute of genius; but his father claimed for him a sort of second sight, a power to look into the depths of the earth, and discover where its precious treasures were hid. Consequently long before the idea of a GOLDEN BIBLE entered their minds, in their excursions for money-digging, which I believe usually occurred in the night, that they might conceal from others the knowledge of the place where they struck upon treasures, Jo used to be usually their guide, putting into a hat a peculiar stone he had through which he looked to decide where they should begin to dig.

According to Martin Harris, it was after one of these night excursions, that Jo, while he lay upon his bed, had a remarkable dream. An angel of God seemed to approach him, clad in celestial splendour. This divine messenger assured him, that he, Joseph Smith, was chosen of the Lord to be a prophet of the Most High God, and to bring to light hidden things, that would prove of unspeakable benefit to the world. He then disclosed to him the existence of this golden Bible, and the place where it was deposited—but at the same time told him that he must follow implicitly the divine direction, or he would draw down upon him the wrath of heaven. This book, which was contained in a chest, or ark, and which consisted of metallic plates covered with characters embossed in gold, he must not presume to look into, under three years. He must first go on a journey into Pennsylvania—and there among the mountains, he would meet with a very lovely woman, belonging to a highly respectable and pious family, whom he was to take for his wife.[9] As a proof that he was sent on this mission by Jehovah, as soon as he saw this designated person, he would be smitten with her beauty, and though he was a stranger to her, and she was far above him in the walks of life, she would at once be willing to marry him and go with him to the ends of the earth. After their marriage he was to return to his former home, and remain quietly there until the birth of his first child. When this child had completed his second year, he might then proceed to the hill beneath which the mysterious chest was deposited, and draw it thence, and publish the truths it contained to the world.[10] Smith awoke from his dream, and according to Harris, started

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9. According to some sources, Smith was told by the messenger at his second visit to the hill (22 September 1824) that he was to bring his wife and that he would know her when he met her (III.A.15, HENRY HARRIS STATEMENT, CIRCA 1833, 252; III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 16; and IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 1).

10. This is similar to the testimony of others. Sophia Lewis, for instance, claimed she heard Smith say "the Book of Plates could not be opened

off towards Pennsylvania, not knowing to what point he should go. But the Lord directed him, and gained him favour in the eyes of just such a person as was described to him. He was married and had returned. His first child had been born and was now about six months old.[11] But Jo had not been altogether obedient to the heavenly vision. After his marriage and return from Pennsylvania, he became so awfully impressed with the high destiny that awaited him, that he communicated the secret to his father and family.[12] The money-digging propensity of the old man operated so powerfully, that he insisted upon it that they should go and dig and see if the chest was there—not with any view to remove it till the appointed time, but merely to satisfy themselves. Accordingly they went forth in the stillness of night with their spades and mattocks to the spot where slumbered this sacred deposit. They had proceeded but a little while in the work of excavation, before the mysterious chest appeared; but lo! instantly it moved and glided along out of their sight. Directed, however, by the *clairvoyance* of Jo, they again penetrated to the spot where it stood and succeeded in gaining a partial view of its dimensions. But while they were pressing forward to gaze at it, the thunders of the Almighty shook the spot and made the earth to tremble—a sheet of vivid lightning swept along over the side of the hill, and burnt terribly around the spot where the excavation was going on, and again with a rumbling noise the chest moved off out of their sight. They were all terrified, and fled towards their home. Jo took his course silently along by himself. On his way homeward, being alone, and in the woods, the angel of the Lord met him clad in terror and wrath. He spoke in a voice of thunder, and forked lightning shot through the trees and ran along upon the ground. The terror of the divine messenger's appearance instantly struck Smith to the earth, and he felt his whole frame convulsed with agony, as though he was stamped upon by the iron hoofs of death himself. In language most terrific did the angel upbraid him for his disobedience, and then disappeared. Smith went home trembling and full of terror. Soon, however, his mind became more composed. Another divine communication was made to him, author-

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under penalty of death by any other person but his (Smith's) first-born, which was to be a male" (V.A.5, SOPHIA LEWIS STATEMENT, 1834; see also V.A.1, ISAAC HALE STATEMENT, 1834).

11. Emma Smith gave birth to an infant son named Alvin on 15 June 1828, who died the same day (see V.E.3, INFANT'S GRAVESTONE, 15 JUN 1828).

12. This is incorrect since Smith had been open with his family about his spiritual manifestations and the existence of the plates.

izing him to go alone by himself and bring the chest and deposit it secretly under the hearth[13] of his dwelling, but by no means to attempt to look into it. The reason assigned by the angel for this removal, was that some report in relation to the place where this sacred book was deposited had gone forth, and there was danger of its being disturbed. According to Harris, Smith now scrupulously followed the divine directions. He was already in possession of the two transparent stones laid up with the GOLDEN BIBLE, by looking through which he was enabled to read the golden letters on the plates in the box. How he obtained these spectacles without opening the chest, Harris could not tell. But still he had them; and by means of them he could read all the book contained. The book itself was not to be disclosed until Smith's child had attained a certain age.[14] Then it might be published to the world. In the interim, Smith was to prepare the way for the conversion of the world to a new system of faith, by transcribing the characters from the plates and giving translations of the same. This was the substance of Martin Harris' communication to me upon our first interview. He then carefully unfolded a slip of paper, which contained three or four lines of characters,[15] as unlike letters or hieroglyphics of any sort, as well could be produced were one to shut up his eyes and play off the most antic movements with his pen upon paper. The only thing that bore the slightest resemblance to the letter of any language that I had ever seen, was two upright marks joined by a horizontal line, that might have been taken for the Hebrew character ה . My ignorance of the characters in which this pretended ancient record was written, was to Martin Harris new proof that Smith's whole account of the divine revelation made to him was entirely to be relied on.[16]

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13. There are many accounts of the plates being hidden under the Smiths' hearth, but see particularly III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 166-67.

14. See n. 11 above.

15. The transcript of Book of Mormon characters at the RLDS Church Library-Archives has seven lines of characters (see V.E.2, BOOK OF MORMON CHARACTERS, DEC 1827-FEB 1828). This document exhibits careful construction, rather than the promiscuous composition indicated by Clark.

16. As suggested in n. 4 above, Harris may have shown the characters to Clark during his second visit, which evidently occurred after Harris had seen Charles Anthon in New York City. Otherwise one must either assume Smith made a transcription before his departure from Manchester, for which there is no corroborative evidence, or postulate Harris returned to Palmyra with the characters before taking them to New York City, which is unlikely.

One thing is here to be noticed, that the statements of the originators of this imposture varied, and were modified from time to time according as their plans became more matured. At first it was a gold Bible—then golden plates engraved—then metallic plates stereotyped or embossed with golden letters. At one time Harris was to be enriched by the solid gold of these plates, at another they were to be religiously kept to convince the world of the truth of the revelation—and, then these plates could not be seen by any but three witnesses whom the Lord should choose. How easy it would be, were there any such plates in existence, to produce them, and to show that Mormonism is not a "cunningly devised fable." How far Harris was duped by this imposture, or how far he entered into it as a matter of speculation, I am unable to say. Several gentlemen in Palmyra, who saw and conversed with him frequently, think he was labouring under a sort of monomania, and that he thoroughly believed all that Jo Smith chose to tell him on this subject. He was so much in earnest on the subject, that he immediately started off with some of the manuscripts that Smith furnished him on a journey to New York and Washington[17] to consult some learned men to ascertain the nature of the language in which this record was engraven. After his return, he came to see me again, and told me that among others he had consulted Professor Anthon, of Columbia College, who thought the characters in which the book was written very remarkable, but he could not decide exactly what language they belonged to.[18] Martin had now become a perfect believer. He said he had no more doubt of Smith's divine commission, than of the divine commission of the apostles. The very fact that Smith was an obscure and illiterate man, showed that he must be acting under divine impulses. "God had chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things to confound the mighty; and base things [of the world], and things which are despised—yea, and things that are not to bring to nought things that are—that no flesh should glory in his presence." That he was willing to "take of the spoiling of his goods" to sustain Smith in carrying on this work of the Lord: and that he was determined that the book should be published, though it consumed all his worldly substance. It was in vain I endeavoured to

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17. In addition to visiting New York City, Harris evidently sought learned opinion in Albany and Utica (III.I.2, W. W. PHELPS TO E. D. HOWE, 15 JAN 1831), but it is doubtful that he would have gone to Washington, D.C.

18. Harris reportedly said Anthon declared the characters "Egyptian, Chaldeak, Assyriac, and Arabac" (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 9). On Charles Anthon (1797-1867), see introduction to V.D.2, CHARLES ANTHON TO E. D. HOWE, 17 FEB 1834.

expostulate. I was an unbeliever, and could not see afar off. As for him, he must follow the light which God had given him. Whether at this time Smith had those colleagues that certainly afterwards moved unseen the wheels of this machinery, I am unable to say. Even after Cowdery[19] and Rigdon[20] were bending the whole force of their minds to the carrying out of this imposture, Jo Smith continued to be the ostensible prominent actor in the drama. The way that Smith made his transcripts and transcriptions for Harris was the following: Although in the same room, a thick curtain or blanket was suspended between them, and Smith concealed behind the blanket, pretended to look through his spectacles, or transparent stones, and would then write down or repeat what he saw, which, when repeated aloud, was written down by Harris, who sat on the other side of the suspended blanket.[21] Harris was told that it would arouse the most terrible divine displeasure, if he should attempt to draw near the sacred chest, or look at Smith while engaged in the work of decyphering the mysterious characters. This was Harris' own account of the matter to me. What other measures they afterwards took to transcribe or translate from these metallic plates, I cannot say, as I very soon after this removed to another field of labour where I heard no more of this matter till I learned the BOOK OF MORMON was about being published. It was not till after the discovery of the manuscript of Spaulding, of which I shall subsequently give some account, that the actors in this imposture thought of calling the pretended revelation the BOOK OF MORMON. This book, which professed to be a translation of the golden Bible brought to light by Joseph Smith was published in 1830—to accomplish which Martin Harris actually mortgaged his farm.

In addition to the facts with which I myself was conversant in 1827 and 1828, connected with the rise of Mormonism, I have been able to lay hold of one or two valuable documents, and obtain several items of intelligence, by which I shall be enabled to continue this sketch of the rise and origin of this singular imposture. To my mind there never was a grosser piece of deception undertaken to be practiced than this. But I find I shall be obliged to postpone till another number the full development which I wish to make

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19. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

20. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

21. Harris apparently also told Anthon about the blanket between himself and Smith (V.D.2, CHARLES ANTHON TO E. D. HOWE, 17 FEB 1834, 270-71; and V.D.3, CHARLES ANTHON TO THOMAS WINTHROP COIT, 3 APR 1841, 235).

before finishing this sketch. You will probably hear from me in relation to this matter next week.

Yours, &c. J.A.C.

[*2. Letter, 31 August 1840*]

FAIRFIELD, August 31, 1840.

Dear Brethren,—According to the intimation given in my last, I proceed to furnish you with some further facts in relation to the origin and history of Mormonism. In developing the history of this imposture, and showing the several steps by which it has won its way to the regard, and gained the confidence of thousands, it becomes necessary to account for the existence of what is denominated THE BOOK OF MORMON—a volume containing 588 duodecimo pages, consisting of fifteen different books, purporting to be written at different times, and by different authors, whose names they respectively bear. ...[22]

I shall have occasion hereafter to refer to the loss of the one hundred and sixteen pages spoken of by Harris,[23] and to the manner in which they were lost; as this fact will not only tend to illustrate Harris' character, but to throw some farther light upon the sinuous track which was pursued to palm off the BOOK OF MORMON as a divine revelation. ...[24] These pages were lost in the following way. Harris brought home the manuscript pages and locked them up in his house thinking them quite safe. But his wife, who was not then, nor ever afterwards became a convert to Mormonism, took the opportunity, when he was out, to seize the manuscript and put it into the hands of one of her neighbours for safe keeping.[25] When the manuscript was discovered to be missing, suspicion immediately fastened upon Mrs. Harris, she however refused to give any information in relation to the matter, but simply replied: "If this be a divine communication, the same being who revealed it to you can easily replace it." Mrs. H[arris]. believed the whole

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22. Clark's brief discussion of the Book of Mormon's authorship and reproduction of Isaac Hale's 1834 statement are here deleted (see V.A.1, ISAAC HALE STATEMENT, 1834).

23. Clark evidently obtained the number of lost pages from the preface to the Book of Mormon (see III.L.16, BOOK OF MORMON PREFACE, 1830).

24. Clark's intervening speculations about the Spaulding theory have been deleted.

25. For a discussion of the lost translation manuscript, see introduction to III.L.16, BOOK OF MORMON PREFACE, 1829.

thing to be a gross deception, and she had formed a plan to expose the deception in the following manner. Taking it for granted that they would attempt to reproduce the part she had concealed, and that they could not possibly do it verbatim, she intended to keep the manuscript until the book was published, and then put these one hundred and sixteen pages into the hands of some one who would publish them, and show how they varied from those published in the Book of Mormon.[26] But she had to deal with persons standing behind the scene, and moving the machinery that were too wily thus to be caught. Harris was indignant at his wife beyond measure—he raved most violently, and it is said [he] actually beat Mrs. H[arris]. with a rod—but she remained firm, and would not give up the manuscript.[27] The authors of this imposture did not dare to attempt to re-produce this part of the work; but Jo Smith immediately had a revelation [D&C 10] about it which is inserted in the preface of the Book of Mormon as follows: ...[28] [p. 98]

To know how much this testimony [of three witnesses] is worth I will state one fact. A gentleman in Palmyra, bred to the law, a professor of religion, and of undoubted veracity told me that on one occasion, he appealed to Harris and asked him directly,—"Did you *see* those plates?" Harris replied, he did. "Did you see the plates, and the engraving on them with your bodily eyes?" Harris replied, "Yes, I saw them with my eyes,—they were shown unto me by the power of God and not of man." "But did you see them with your natural,—your bodily eyes, just as you see this pencil-case in my hand? Now say *no* or *yes* to this." Harris replied,—"Why I did not see them as I do that pencil-case, yet I saw them with the eye of faith; I saw them just as distinctly as I see any thing around me,—though at the time they were covered over with a cloth."[29]

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26. This is likely Clark's inference taken from the Book of Mormon's preface, rather than information obtained from any of the principals in the affair. The manuscript was probably taken by Lucy Harris and immediately destroyed (see discussion in introduction to III.L.16, BOOK OF MORMON PREFACE, 1829).

27. On Harris abusing his wife, see III.A.7, LUCY HARRIS STATEMENT, 29 NOV 1833.

28. Clark's reproduction of the Book of Mormon's preface has been deleted (see III.L.16, BOOK OF MORMON PREFACE, 1829). Clark's continued discussion of the Spaulding theory and reproduction of the Testimony of Three Witnesses have also been deleted (see VI.G.1, TESTIMONY OF THREE WITNESSES, JUN 1829).

29. While there are a number of testimonies regarding Harris's statement about seeing the plates with his "spiritual eyes" (e.g., III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 4), Clark's account of Har-

...[30] As I have before taken occasion to remark, Harris was ready to be duped by any thing which these jugglers were disposed to tell him. He seemed to think at length that he himself was inspired, and that revelations from heaven were made to him in reference to the most minute affairs in life. After the BOOK OF MORMON was published it was revealed to him that he should sell it for $1[.]50 per copy.[31] But as it did not sell very briskly at that price, he declared that another revelation was made to him from heaven, and that he was ordered to sell the book for $1 per copy. No matter where he went, he saw visions and supernatural appearances all around him. He told a gentleman in Palmyra, after one of his excursions to Pennsylvania, while the translation of the Book of Mormon was going on, that on the way he met the Lord Jesus Christ, who walked along by the side of him in the shape of a deer for two or three miles, talking with him as familiarly as one man talks with another.[32] With a knowledge of the facts that have now been stated, the existence of the Book of Mormon can well be accounted for, and also the success of this imposture. There are a few facts farther I have to communicate, which I shall be obliged to reserve till the next number.

J.A.C.

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ris's seeing the plates through a cloth is paralleled in Stephen Burnett's report that Harris said in 1838 that "he hefted the plates repeatedly in a box with only a tablecloth or a handkerchief over them, but he never saw them only as he saw a city through a mountain" (III.F.7, STEPHEN BURNETT TO LYMAN E. JOHNSON, 15 APR 1838).

30. Clark's speculations about the testimonies of the three and eight witnesses to the Book of Mormon have been deleted.

31. See III.A.15, HENRY HARRIS STATEMENT, CIRCA 1833.

32. According to Ohio newspapers, shortly after Harris arrived in Kirtland he began claiming to have "seen Jesus Christ and that he is the handsomest man he ever did see. He has also seen the Devil, whom he described as a very sleek haired fellow with four feet, and a head like that of a Jack-ass" (*Guernsey Times,* 16 April 1831; *American Friend and Marietta Gazette,* 30 April 1831).

2.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH *ROCHESTER* (NY) *GEM*, CIRCA JUNE 1829

"Golden Bible," *Rochester* (NY) *Gem* 1 (5 September 1829): 70.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Attempting to locate a printer for the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith and Martin Harris visited Rochester, New York, probably in early June 1829 (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 26, 34; III.K.17, THURLOW WEED REMINISCENCES, 1854, 1858, 1880 & 1884). Shortly after their return to Palmyra, two interrelated items appeared in Rochester newspapers outlining Smith's claims: The first appeared in the Rochester *Advertiser and Telegraph* on 31 August 1829, which reprinted an item published in the *Palmyra Freeman* (see III.E.2, *PALMYRA FREEMAN,* CIRCA AUG 1829); the second appeared in the *Rochester Gem* on 5 September 1829. The latter source is apparently influenced by the former, although the *Gem* claims to be based on an interview with Harris.

Described as "a quaint little publication ... dedicated to the literary and domestic interests of the community," *The Gem, A Semi-Monthly, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* (1829-43) was published at Rochester, New York, by Edwin Scrantom, according to Henry O'Reilly, in the office of the Rochester *Democrat,* which was edited by George Dowson, Jr. (McKelvey 1945, 199; O'Reilly 1838, 326). Original copies of the *Gem* are extremely rare, incomplete files of which may be found at the New York State Library, Albany, New York, and the Rochester Public Library (see Kirkham 1951, 1:16, 152).

A man by the name of Martin Harris was in this village a few days since endeavouring to make a contract for printing a large quantity of a work called the Golden Bible. He gave something like the following account of it. "In the autumn of 1827 a man named Joseph Smith of Manchester, in Ontario County, said that he had been visited by the spirit of the Almighty in a dream, and informed that in a certain hill in that town was deposited a Golden Bible, containing an ancient record of divine origin. He states that after a third visit from the same spirit in a dream, he proceeded to the spot, removed earth, and there found the bible, together with a large pair of spectacles. He had

also been directed to let no mortal see them under the penalty of immediate death, which injunction he steadfastly adheres to. The treasure consisted of a number of gold plates, about 8 inches long, 6 wide, and one eighth of an inch thick, on which were engraved hieroglyphics. By placing the spectacles in a hat and looking into it, Smith interprets the characters into the English language.

Harris states that he went in search of some one to interpret the hieroglyphics, but found that no one was intended to perform that all important task but Smith himself. Smith has interpreted the whole, and it is now in press in Palmyra, Wayne Co.[1] The subject attracts a good deal of notice among a certain class, and as it will be ere long before the public, we shall endeavor to meet it with the comment it may deserve.—*Ed Gem.*

1. Typesetting began in mid-August 1829.

3.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES BUTLER, CIRCA 1830-1831

1. Charles Butler, "Recollections and Biographical notes of the life of Charles Butler," 1-4, undated, Charles Butler Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

2. Charles Butler to unidentified person, undated, partial typescript, Charles Butler Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

3. Francis H. Stoddard, *The Life and Letters of Charles Butler* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903), 125-28.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Charles Butler (1802-97) was born at Kinderhook Landing on the Hudson River. He was educated at the Academy at Greenville, New York, and with his brother Benjamin became a legal clerk in the office of Martin Van Buren. In 1822 he became deputy clerk of the New York State Senate. He was admitted to the New York bar in 1824, practiced law in Lyons a short time, then moved to Geneva to become partner with Judge Bowen Whiting, state senator and district attorney of Ontario County. He was also well-known for his anti-Masonic activities, including his prosecution of William Morgan's kidnappers as assistant district attorney of Genessee County. He became an agent of the New York Life Insurance and Trust Company of Geneva when it was formed in the spring of 1830. Among his religious activities, he helped found New York's Union Theological Seminary, serving as its president from 1870 until his death (Malone 1936, 1:359-60; Haeger 1981, 24, 29-38).

According to Butler, Martin Harris visited him at Geneva to obtain a loan from the New York Life Insurance and Trust Company. The dating of Harris's visit with Butler is problematic. As Richard L. Bushman has noted: "Butler dated Harris's visit in 1831 or 1832, an error unless Martin went to Butler in the spring of 1831 as the note to Grandin fell due. ... The 1832 date is eliminated because James Gordon Bennett interviewed Butler in the summer of 1831 and Harris had made his application before that time" (Bushman 1984, 227, n. 109; III.K.6, JAMES GORDON BENNETT ACCOUNT, 1831). Indeed, Harris's note to Grandin was due on 25 February 1831, and on 7 April 1831 Harris sold his farm to Thomas Lakey

for $3,000 (III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829). However, the necessity of a second mortgage became apparent to Harris early on. Harris initially intended to pay off his debt to Grandin with money from sales of the Book of Mormon. But even before its publication, Harris's confidence must have been shaken when Palmyrans threatened to boycott the book. When Joseph Knight took Joseph Smith to Manchester in his wagon in late March 1830, they found Harris carrying a bundle of newly bound copies of the Book of Mormon. "The Books will not sell for no body wants them," Harris declared. "I think they will sell well," Smith said. "I want a Commandment," Harris demanded. "Why," Smith said, "fullfill what you have got." But Harris insisted, "I must have a Commandment" (IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 6). The following day Smith dictated a revelation which declared, "I command thee [Harris] that thou shalt not covet thine own property, but impart it freely to the printing of the Book of Mormon" (LDS D&C 19:26). Harris may have sought the help of the newly-formed New York Life Insurance and Trust Company shortly after the March 1830 revelation. Although dating Harris's visit to 1831 or 1832, Butler believed it had occurred prior to the publication of the Book of Mormon. Perhaps for this reason, Butler's biographer, Francis H. Stoddard, dated the event to 1830 (see item 3 below).

There are other considerations that support an 1830 date for the Butler-Harris meeting. In going to Geneva, Harris was evidently attempting to take out an additional mortgage to pay off his debt to Grandin without losing his farm. First, it is unlikely that Harris would have waited until the spring of 1831 before exploring this option. Second, it seems doubtful that Harris would have attempted to retain possession of his farm after Smith's revelations, beginning in December 1830, made it clear that the church was moving to Ohio (see LDS D&C 37 and 38).

[*1. Recollections and Biographical Notes*][1]

In 1831 or 1832[2] while engaged in making loans for the N[ew] Y[ork] Life

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1. This item is from Butler's notebook. It is undated, but includes the following statement: "This book contains statements dictated by Mr. Butler a few years ago either to Mr. Wm Allen Butler or to his clerk." Pagination has been added for convenience. According to archivists, the Charles Butler Papers were given to the Library of Congress by his daughter, Emily O. Butler, in 1925.

2. On dating, see introduction.

Ins[urance] & Trust Co[mpany] of which Wm Bard[3] was Pres[iden]t & B.F.B.[4] one of the original incorporators a man came to C[harles] B[utler] (in Geneva) from Palmyra, Wayne Co with letter of introduction from Jessup[5] who was elder in Pres[byterian]. ch[urch] there to C[harles]. B[utler]. The letter introduced Martin Harris as a well to do farmer in Pal[myra]. who wanted to borrow a sum of money on his farm. C[harles] B[utler] according to ⊢⊣ <his> custom asked what he wanted the money for. After some hesitation he said he wanted it to pay for printing a book, which would cost $1,300.[6] This was a surprise, that a Wayne Co farmer should be willing to mortgage his farm in order to print a book and Mr B[utler] asked what is the book. He said—"a Bible"—& on being asked what Bible—he said "The Mormon Bible"—and then went on to say that a young man named Joseph Smith living in Palmyra had been directed by a vision from God to go to a certain place in [p. 1] the town of Manchester the town in Ontario Co next adjoining Palmyra on the North and that on digging there he would find the plates of ~~a~~ books of the Bible. that Smith had done according to the direction of the vision and had found the plates which he had in his pos=session and from which Harris was desirous of having the Bible printed. Mr B[utler]. told Harris that he could not lend the money for such a purpose as he did not regard it as legitimate business for a farmer to mortgage his farm for such a purpose but on Harris pressing the application he consented to submit it to Mr Bard and Harris left after arranging to come again in a Short time for a final answer. Mr B[utler]. wrote to Mr Bard giving the particulars of the application which was declined.[7] [p. 2] According to appointment Harris

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3. William Bard, in his fifties, is listed in the 1830 census of New York City (8th Ward) (1830:212).

4. Probably Butler's brother Benjamin F. Butler in Albany, one of the trustees of the New York Life Insurance and Trust Company (Haeger 1981, 29).

5. On Henry Jessup, see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, n. 106. Butler "acquainted himself with the leading men of an area, such as clergymen and justices of the peace, in order to obtain character references on prospective clients. Butler's religious zeal also led him to check into the drinking habits of his customers" (Haeger 1981, 33).

6. According to John H. Gilbert, he was called on during the "forepart" of June 1829 to help Egbert B. Grandin estimate the cost of printing the Book of Mormon, the latter eventually agreeing to print 5,000 copies for $3,000 (III.H.8, JOHN H. GILBERT STATEMENT, 23 OCT 1887; III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892).

7. Harris would not have found the terms satisfactory, since the company "rarely loaned even half of the appraised value" (Haeger 1981, 34).

came again to Geneva when the result was made known to him. He said I shall procure the money & the Book shall be printed & when printed I will send you a copy of it. He did in fact raise the money & not long afterwards brought or sent to Mr B[utler] the promised Mormon Bible. Harris later on removed from Palmyra with Smith & followed the fortunes of the Mormon Leader[.]

Mr B[utler] adds that some time after Harris' applications to him, as he was walking in the street at Geneva he was accosted by a young man who showed him a letter asking if he knew where he c[oul]d find the person to whom it was addressed. The letter was to Mr B[utler]. from Ja[me]s Watson Webb[8] ~~intro~~ then ⊢ editor of the N[ew] Y[ork] Inquirer intro=ducing ⊢ the bearer James [p. 3] Gordon Bennett[9] who was sent to get information about the discovery of the Mormon Bible[10]

[*2. Letter to Unidentified Person*][11]

Among the applicants for money who came to me at Geneva<,> as I now recollect<,> was one Martin Harris<,> of Palmyra, Wayne County. He brought a letter of introduction to me from a highly respectable citizen of that town, a Mr. Jessup, who was a leading man and an el=der in the Presbyterian Church and on whose judgment I depended in respect to the character of the borrower and the value of the property in all cases of applications for loans from that quarter. From the letter of Mr. Jessup the bearer was introduced to me as a very worth<y> and substantial farmer, possessing a very excellent farm which would furnish a very ample security for the amount of money which he wished to obtain, viz. $1,300.00<,> and he commended Mr. Harris to me as a desirable borrower. As usual, my first

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8. James Watson Webb (1802-84) was born at Claverack, New York. He became editor of the *New York Courier* in 1827, which merged with Mordecai M. Noah's *Enquirer* in 1829 to become the *New York Courier and Enquirer*. Because of financial difficulties, Webb resigned his editorship of the *Courier* in 1861 (Crouthamel 1969).

9. On James Gordon Bennett (1795-1872), see introduction to III.K.6, JAMES GORDON BENNETT ACCOUNT, 1831.

10. James Gordon Bennett's journal indicates that his interview with Butler took place on 8 August 1831 (see III.K.6, JAMES GORDON BENNETT ACCOUNT, 1831).

11. This document is said to be a fragment of a "letter" written by Charles Butler to an unidentified person. It is a single typewritten page, numbered 8 at the top, with preceding and succeeding pages missing. Some corrections have been made by an unknown hand.

~~en~~<in>quiry of Mr. Harris was ~~to know the~~ <for what> purpose ~~for which~~ he wanted the money. In reply to this, with some hesitation, he stated that he wanted it to pay for publishing a book. This excited my curiosity to know what sort of a book <it was that> a farmer desired to mortgage his farm to publish. His answer to this was<,> that it was the Mormon Bible. This was the first that I had ever heard of the Mormon Bible and my curiosity was <further> excited in regard to it. I interrogated him as to its character and what it was. He then informed me that the plates for it had been discovered by one Joseph Smith, a young man then living at Palmyra, whom he knew well and who had been guided in his discoveries by divine inspiration, which had directed him to. ...

[*3. Published Version*]

... It was in the early part of its beneficent service to the farmers that the Trust Company for which he [Butler] acted had an opportunity rarely given to a financial institution. It might have been the means of printing a Bible and of becoming sponsor for a new religion. One morning in 1830 as Mr. Butler entered the office, usually found full of farmers seeking loans, he met a respectable citizen, one Martin Harris of Palmyra, who brought him letters of commendation from a person of repute in his town and desired a loan of thirteen hundred dollars. Since the building up of the communities was very much at heart with him, it was Mr. Butler's custom never to advise a loan unless the applicant could give proof of good habits, character and capacity, and also a worthy purpose for which the money was desired. So a catechism began and went on to complete satisfaction until the last question was propounded. With much hesitation the farmer admitted that he wanted the money to pay for publishing a book. Now farmers in New York had not up to that time been much given to the habit of mortgaging [p. 125] their farms in order to publish books, and Mr. Butler's curiosity was excited. It was not diminished when Mr. Harris seriously said that the book he wished to publish was a Bible.

... [p. 126] ...[12] This was the book that Martin Harris wished to publish, the famous Mormon Bible, documentary basis of a religion noted in later days, and still of importance in at least one western State.

The earnest convert, although much discouraged by Mr. Butler's refusal to make the loan or to commend the project to the consideration of the New

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12. Francis H. Stoddard's brief, but inaccurate, description of the Book of Mormon's contents is here deleted.

York Life Insurance and Trust Company, departed asserting that nevertheless the Bible would be printed, that he would receive a copy, and that when he had read it he would become a convert. Only a few days later[13] Mr. Butler met a tall, alert-looking young man on the street who gave him a letter from James Watson Webb of the *New York Courier and Inquirer,* introducing James Gordon Bennett, sent thus promptly as a reporter into these distant western wilds for infor[p. 127]mation concerning this Mormon Bible. Mr. Bennett was then the assistant editor of the *Courier* and four years later became the enterprising founder of the *New York Herald.* It may be added that two of the assertions of Martin Harris were made good, for the book was published and Charles Butler received a copy.

13. Stoddard is incorrect in dating Butler's meeting with James Gordon Bennett "a few days" after his meeting with Harris, which Stoddard evidently believed had occurred in 1830. The Butler-Bennett meeting actually occurred on 8 August 1831.

4.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH EZRA BOOTH, 1831

Ezra Booth to Ira Eddy, 2 October 1831, *Ohio Star* (Ravenna, Ohio) 2 (20 October 1831): 3. Reprinted in E. D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 182-83.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Ezra Booth (1792-?) was born in Connecticut. He was living in Nelson, Ohio, when he married Dorcus Taylor in March 1819. By 1817 he had become a Methodist minister (see Brunson 1832, 259). He converted to Mormonism about May 1831. However, he quickly became disillusioned with Joseph Smith and withdrew from the church in September 1831. The details of Booth's death are unknown, but he was residing in Mantua, Portage County, Ohio, in 1860 (L. Cook 1981, 72-73).

Almost immediately after his departure from Mormonism, Booth began writing an exposé of Mormonism in the form of a series of letters to Ira Eddy, a "presiding Elder" of the Methodist Episcopal church in Ravenna, Ohio (Howe 1834, 175; *History of Portage County, Ohio,* 1885, 443, 533; Ira Eddy, in his thirties, is listed in the 1830 Edinburg, Portage County, Ohio, census [1830:208]). The nine letters were soon published in the *Ohio Star* (October-December 1831), and represent the first anti-Mormon literature by an apostate Mormon. Of these letters, historian D. Michael Quinn has noted: "Booth's letters were not only the first published exposé, but also the first Mormon history published by a Mormon" (Quinn 1992, 13).[1]

In his second letter to the Reverend Eddy, dated 2 October 1831, Booth included a brief account of an interview he had with Martin Harris earlier that year. According to Booth, Harris told him about a conversation he had with Joseph Smith in Harmony, Pennsylvania. Booth's account fails to date the event, but Dale Morgan believed it occurred during Harris's first visit to Harmony in February 1828 (J. P. Walker 1986, 280, 387, n. 11). It is also possible that the conversation Booth describes took

1. For Booth's account of New York Mormonism, see VI.F.3, EZRA BOOTH ACCOUNTS, 1831.

place in April 1828, when Harris returned to Harmony to become Smith's scribe.

Nelson, Portage Co. Oct. 2, 1831.

REV. & DEAR SIR—

... Joseph Smith, Jun. Sidney Rigdon,[2] Oliver Cowdrey[3] and Martin Harris, may be considered as the principals in this work; and let Martin Harris tell the story, and he is the most conspicuous of the four.—He informed me, that he went to the place where Joseph resided, and Joseph had given it up,[4] on account of the opposition of his wife[5] and others: but he told Joseph, "I have not come down here for nothing, and we will go on with it." ...

Yours affectionately,
E. BOOTH.

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2. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

3. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

4. In support of this assertion, Dale Morgan referred to a revelation of July 1828: "Behold, you [Smith] ... have gone on in the persuasions of men ... behold, you should have not feared man more than God" (BofC 2:3; cf. LDS D&C 3:6-7). But this revelation more properly alludes to Smith's giving in to Harris's pressure to take a portion of the translation manuscript back to Palmyra with him in June 1828.

5. It is uncertain if the phrase "his wife" refers to Emma Smith or Lucy Harris. Emma's possible disapproval of her husband's occupation may have been hinted at by Lorenzo Saunders, who reported that shortly after her marriage to Smith in January 1827 she was "disappointed and used to come to our house and sit down and cry. Said she was deceived and got into a hard place" (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 10). Lucy Harris's opposition is well attested. Sometime between Martin Harris's first visit in February and his beginning to act as Smith's scribe in early April 1828, Lucy and Martin Harris visited Harmony for two weeks, during which time Lucy ransacked the Smiths' residence looking for the plates (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:74-75).

5.
MARTIN HARRIS KIRTLAND (OH) HIGH COUNCIL HEARING, 12 FEBRUARY 1834

"Kirtland Council Minute Book," 28-29, entry of 12 February 1834, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

EDITORIAL NOTE

On 12 February 1834, Joseph Smith appeared before the Kirtland High Council, described the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, and told of his "transgression at the time he was translating the Book of Mormon" (see I.A.8, JOSEPH SMITH RECITAL TO KIRTLAND [OH] HIGH COUNCIL, FEB & APR 1834). On this occasion the council also considered certain statements made by Martin Harris, particularly that Joseph Smith "drank too much liquor while translating the book of Mormon." Harris's correction that "this thing took place before the book of Mormon was translated," made in Smith's presence, went unchallenged, and Harris was forgiven. Access to the original minute book is restricted; the following excerpt was prepared from a typescript.

... After the council had received much good instruction from Bro. Joseph, the case of Bro. Martin Harris against whom certain charges were preferred by bro. Sidney Rigdon.[1] One was that he told Esqr. A. C. Russell[2] that Joseph [Smith] drank too much liquor when he was translating the Book of Mormon[3] and that he wrestled with many men and threw them &c.[4] Another

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1. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

2. Probably Alpheus C. Russell (in his thirties) listed in the 1830 Kirtland, Geauga County, Ohio, census (1830:271).

3. Harris's first assertion is supported by Levi Lewis, who said he saw Smith "intoxicated three different times while he was composing the Book of Mormon" (V.A.4, LEVI LEWIS STATEMENT, 1834). On Joseph Smith's drinking, see III.A.2, BARTON STAFFORD STATEMENT, 3 NOV 1833, n. 4.

4. See I.A.22, JOSEPH SMITH JOURNAL EXCERPTS, 1 JAN, 9 JAN & 21 FEB 1843; III.A.2, BARTON STAFFORD STATEMENT, 3

charge was, that he exalted himself above bro. Joseph, in that he said bro. Joseph knew not the contents of the book of Mormon until it was translated.[5] ~~Bro. Martin~~ but that he himself knew all about it before it was translated. Bro. Martin said he did not tell Esqr Russell that bro. Joseph drank too much liquor while translating the book of Mormon, but this thing took place before the book of Mormon was translated.[6] He confessed that his mind was darkened and that he had said many things inadvertently calculated to wound the feelings of his brethren and promised to do better. The council forgave him and gave him much [p. 28] good advice. ... [p. 29]

NOV 1833; and III.A.12, DAVID STAFFORD STATEMENT, 5 DEC 1833, 249.

5. This is perhaps Harris's apologetic response to the anti-Mormon assertion that Smith "never made any serious pretentions to religion until his late pretended revelations" (see III.E.3, *PALMYRA REFLECTOR,* 1829-1831, under 1 February 1831).

6. Other sources mention Smith's drinking before he began translating the Book of Mormon (see especially III.D.3, CHRISTOPHER M. STAFFORD STATEMENT, 23 MAR 1885; and III.A.12, DAVID STAFFORD STATEMENT, 5 DEC 1833, 249). On Smith's drinking generally, see III.A.2, BARTON STAFFORD STATEMENT, 3 NOV 1833, n. 4.

6.
EBER D. HOWE ON MARTIN HARRIS, 1834

E. D. Howe, *Mormonism Unvailed: or, A Faithful Account of That Singular Imposition and Delusion, from Its Rise to the Present time* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), 13-15.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Eber D. Howe (1798-?) was born at Clifton Park, Saratoga County, New York. He served as an apprentice printer in Buffalo, New York, and in several other towns. He edited the Cleveland *Herald* in 1819 and began publishing the *Painesville Telegraph* on 16 July 1822. In late October and early November 1830 Mormon missionaries visited the area, converting Sidney Rigdon and many others. Howe was undoubtedly disturbed when both his wife, Sophia Hull Howe (1800-66), and sister, Harriet Howe, joined the Mormons sometime before 1834 (see Jessee 1992, 555). Details of his death are presently unknown, but he was still a resident of Painesville in 1885 when Arthur B. Deming obtained a signed statement from him.

For his description of Martin Harris, Howe relied partly on information gleaned from the Philastus Hurlbut affidavits and partly on the observations of those living in the Kirtland, Ohio, area. Howe's account provides an outsider's assessment of Harris's character as a Book of Mormon witness.

MARTIN HARRIS is the next personage of note in the Golden Bible speculation. He is one of the *three witnesses* to the truth of the book, having been shown the plates through the agency of an Angel, instead of the Prophet Joseph, who always had them in possession. Before his acquaintance with the Smith family, he was considered an honest, industrious citizen, by his neighbors. His residence was in the town of Palmyra, where he had accumulated a handsome property. He was naturally of a very visionary turn of mind on the subject of religion, holding one sentiment but a short time.[1] He engaged in the new Bible business with a view of making a handsome sum of money from the sale of the books, as he was frequently heard to say.[2] The whole expense of publishing an edition of

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1. See III.A.5, G. W. STODDARD STATEMENT, 28 NOV 1833.

2. See III.A.7, LUCY HARRIS STATEMENT, 29 NOV 1833; and III.A.6, ABIGAIL HARRIS STATEMENT, 28 NOV 1833.

5000 copies, was borne by Martin, to secure the payment of which, he mortgaged his farm for $3000.[3] Having failed in his anticipations about the sale of the books, (the retail price of which they said was fixed by an Angel at $1[.]75, but afterwards reduced to $1[.]25, and from that down to any price they could obtain)[4] he adopted Smith as his Prophet, Priest and King. Since that time, the frequent demands upon Martin's purse have reduced it to [p. 13] a very low state. He seems to have been the soul and body of the whole imposition, and now carries the most incontestible proofs of a religious maniac. He frequently declares that he has conversed with Jesus Christ, Angels and the Devil. Christ he says is the handsomest man he ever saw; and the Devil looks very much like a jack-ass, with very short, smooth hair, similar to that of a mouse.[5] He says he wrote a considerable part of the book, as Smith dictated, and at one time the presence of the Lord was so great, that a screen was hung up between him and the Prophet; at other times the Prophet would sit in a different room, or up stairs, while the Lord was communicating to him the contents of the plates. He does not pretend that he ever saw the wonderful plates but once, although he and Smith were engaged for months in deciphering their contents. He has left his wife to follow the fortunes of Smith. He has frequent fits of prophecying, although they are not held in very high repute among his brethren. A specimen of his prophetic powers we subjoin. They were written for the special information of a friend of his who placed them upon the wall of his office, and are in these words:[6]

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3. See III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829.

4. See III.A.15, HENRY HARRIS STATEMENT, CIRCA 1833.

5. See also *Guernsey Times,* 16 April 1831; and *American Friend and Marietta Gazette,* 30 April 1831.

6. John A. Clark either imperfectly related the same instance in which Martin Harris made the two predictions or described a similar occasion: "Martin Harris, after he went to Kirtland, Ohio, where the first Mormon settlement was formed, used occasionally to return to Palmyra. ... In these visits to the place of his former residence he not only endeavoured to proselyte his old acquaintances to his new faith, but used sometimes to edify them with very solemn prophecies of future events. I was informed by Judge S—— of Palmyra, that he came to his office so much and uttered his prophecies so frequently that he at length told him, that he would not consent to his uttering his predictions any more orally, but that he must write them down and subscribe his name to them, or else seek some other place for the exercise of his prophetic gift. Harris instantly wrote down two predictions, attaching his signature to each. The one was a declaration that Palmyra would be destroyed, and left utterly without inhabitant before the year 1836. The other prediction

"Within four years from September 1832, there will not be one wicked person left in the United States; that the righteous will be gathered to Zion, [Missouri,][7] and that there will be no President over these United States after that time.[8]

MARTIN HARRIS."

"I do hereby assert and declare that in four years from the date hereof, every sectarian and religious denomination in the United States, shall be broken down, and every Christian shall be gathered unto the Mormonites, and the rest of the human race shall perish. If these things do not take place, I will hereby consent to have my hand separated from my body.

MARTIN HARRIS."

Martin is an exceedingly fast talker. He frequently gathers a crowd around him in bar-rooms and in the streets.—Here he appears to be in his element, answering and explain[p. 14]ing all manner of dark and abstruse theological questions, from Genesis to Revelations; declaring that every thing has been revealed to him by the "power of God." During these flights of fancy, he frequently prophecies of the coming of Christ, the destruction of the world, and the damnation of certain individuals. At one time he declared that Christ would be on earth within fifteen years, and all who did not believe the book of Mormon would be destroyed.

He is the source of much trouble and perplexity to the honest portion of his brethren, and would undoubtedly long since have been cast off by Smith, were it not for his money, and the fact that he is one of the main pillars of the Mormon fabric. Martin is generally believed, by intelligent people, to be laboring under a partial derangement; and that any respectable jury would receive his testimony, in any case, of ever so trifling a nature, we

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was that before 1838 the Mormon faith would so extensively prevail, that it would modify our national government, and there would at that period be no longer any occupant of the presidential chair of the United States. To these predictions he subjoined the declaration that if they were not literally fulfilled, any one might have full permission to cut off his head and roll it around the streets as a football" (*Episcopal Recorder,* 10 October 1840, 114).

7. Bracketed material in original.

8. John H. Gilbert said Harris frequently prophesied that "Jackson would be the last president that we would have; and that all persons who did not embrace Mormonism in two years would be stricken off the face of the earth" (III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 4). Apparently, Harris extended his prediction another four years when it appeared Jackson would be reelected (see Vogel 1989, 26).

do not believe; yet, the subjects of the delusion think him a competent witness to establish miracles of the most unreasonable kind. ...

7.
STEPHEN BURNETT TO LYMAN E. JOHNSON, 15 APRIL 1838

Stephen Burnett to Lyman E. Johnson, 15 April 1838, Joseph Smith Letterbook (1837-43), 2:64-66, Joseph Smith Papers, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Stephen Burnett (1814-?), born in Ohio, was a longtime resident of Orange, Ohio. He was converted to Mormonism and baptized by John Murdock in November 1830. In 1831 he was successively ordained to the offices of priest, elder, and high priest. In 1832 he served a mission for the church (LDS D&C 75:35). By late 1837 he had become disillusioned with church leaders, and by 1838 had publicly denounced Joseph Smith. According to Joseph Smith, Burnett "could not bear to have his purse taxed," so he "proclaimed all revelation lies" (*Elders' Journal,* 1838, 57). Details of his death are presently unknown, but he was still living in Orange, Ohio, in 1850 (L. Cook 1981, 153-54; Cannon and Cook 1983, 26, 251).

On 15 April 1838 Burnett wrote to Lyman E. Johnson (1811-56), a former member of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles living in Far West, Missouri.[1] Burnett described the activities of the dissenters in the Kirtland, Ohio, area, particularly Martin Harris's participation in their discussions about the Book of Mormon. According to Burnett, the dissenters differed among themselves about the status of the Book of Mormon. Warren Parrish, Luke S. Johnson, and John Boynton argued that the book should be rejected, while Martin Harris, Cyrus Smalling, and Joseph Coe continued to believe in it despite their rejection of Joseph Smith. Burnett said that at a public meeting Harris provided information not favorable to his own position, declaring that he and the other two Book of Mormon witnesses, David Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery, had seen the plates only in vision, never physically, and that the eight witnesses had also never seen the plates with

1. Burnett was probably unaware that Johnson had been excommunicated from the church on 13 April 1838, only two days before Burnett addressed his letter to him. Johnson had become critical of church leadership over the Kirtland Bank scandal and began associating with a group of dissenters at Far West (L. Cook 1981, 111).

their physical eyes. About three weeks later, Burnett, Parrish, Johnson, and Boynton spoke at the Kirtland temple against the Book of Mormon, after which Harris, according to Burnett, reiterated his testimony of the Book of Mormon and said "he never should have told that the testimony of the eight [witnesses] was false, if it had not been picked out of h[im]."

While Burnett was impressed by the metaphysical aspects of Harris's statements, George A. Smith, who was evidently also present when Harris made his remarks, chose to emphasize Harris's affirmation of his testimony. In a letter, dated 30 March 1838, Smith described the "unsettled" situation at Kirtland, stating that "Last Sabbath a division arose among the Parrish party about the Book of Mormon; John F. Boyington, Warren Parrish, Luke S. Johnson, and others said it was nonsense. Martin Harris then bore testimony of its truth and said all would be damned if they rejected it. Cyrus Smalling, Joseph Coe and others declared his testimony was true. In this way a division arose to bring about the above-mentioned debate and thus the enemies of truth are divided, while the Saints are growing in grace and in union and knowledge and increasing in number" (George A. Smith to Josiah Fleming, 30 March 1838, cited in "Journal History," 30 March 1838; also R. L. Anderson 1981, 162, 177, n. 31). Unlike Burnett, Smith presumably found nothing challenging to his faith in what Harris had said (see D. Hill 1977, 93).

Yet Burnett's version is supported by Warren Parrish, who in a letter, dated 11 August 1838, reported: "Martin Harris, one of the subscribing witnesses, has come out at last, and says he never saw the plates, from which the book [of Mormon] purports to have been translated, except in vision, and he further says that any man who says he has seen them in any other way is a liar, Joseph [Smith] not excepted;—see new edition, Book of Covenants, page 170 [LDS D&C 17], which agrees with Harris's testimony" (*Evangelist* [Carthage, Ohio] 6 [1 October 1838]: 226).[2] Parrish's additional report makes the suggestion that Burnett's account is "highly interpretive," and therefore inaccurate, difficult to sustain (R. L. Anderson 1981, 155).

How accurately Harris represented the eight witnesses is uncertain since statements by the witnesses are few and inconsistent (see III.L.13, TESTIMONY OF EIGHT WITNESSES, JUN 1829). Hyrum Smith may have

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2. Parrish here refers to a revelation dictated by Joseph Smith in June 1829, which promised the three hopeful witnesses a view of the plates on condition of faith and instructed them to "testify that you have seen them, even as my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., has seen them; *for it is by my power that he has seen them,* and it is because he had faith" (LDS D&C 17:5; emphasis added).

been responding to Harris's statements when he reportedly said in 1838 that "he had but too [two] hands and too [two] eyes[.] he said he had seene the plates with his eyes and handeled them with his hands" (Sally Parker to John Kempton, 26 August 1838; cited in R. L. Anderson 1981, 159, and in introduction to III.L.13, TESTIMONY OF EIGHT WITNESSES, JUN 1829). It is unclear if Hyrum Smith intended to say that his seeing and handling were the same experience, or, as in the case of Martin Harris, that he had handled the plates while covered and later saw them in vision. Although John Whitmer reportedly testified of the physicalness of his experience with the plates (VI.B.2, JOHN WHITMER TESTIMONY, 1836; VI.B.6, JOHN WHITMER TESTIMONY, 1878; and VI.B.7, JOHN WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH P. WILHELM POULSON, APR 1878), he also reportedly said in 1839 that "they [the plates] were shown to me by a supernatural power" (VI.B.3, JOHN WHITMER TESTIMONY, 1839). Regardless, such discrepancies may hint that the Testimony of Eight Witnesses, like that of the three witnesses, is a document which has simplified a process more complex than represented (see discussion in introduction to III.L.13, TESTIMONY OF EIGHT WITNESSES, JUN 1829).

The original of Burnett's letter to Johnson is evidently no longer extant, but it was copied into Joseph Smith's letterbook sometime in 1839.

Orange Township, Geauga Co
Ohio 15th April 1838

Br[other]. Johnson—Dear Sir I have with pleasure just received your favor post marked 26th ult and now you see I take a large sheet that I may have ample room to write—my heart is sickened within me when I reflect upon the manner in which we with many of this Church have been led & the losses which we have sustained all by means of two men in whom we placed implicit confidence, that Joseph Smith & Sidney Rigdon[3] are notorious liars I do not hesitate to affirm, & can prove by a cloud of witnesses & this is not all, Joseph has prophecied in a public congregation lies in the name of the Lord & by undue religious influence he has filched the monies of the Church from their pockets and brought them nigh unto distruction, leaving helpless innocence destitute of a confortable support while he has squandered the hard earnings of these to whom it justly belonged. I have reflected long and deliberately upon the history of this church & weighed the evidence for & against

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3. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

it—loth to give it up—but when I came to hear Martin Harris state in ~~a~~ public ~~congregation~~ that he never saw the plates with his natural eyes only in vision or imagination,[4] neither Oliver [Cowdery][5] nor David [Whitmer][6] & also that the eight witnesses never saw them & hesitated to sign that instrument for that reason, but were persuaded to do it,[7] the last pedestal gave way, in my view our foundations was sapped & the entire superstructure fell a heap of ruins, I therefore three week[s] since in the Stone Chapel gave a full history of the church since I became acquainted with it, the false preaching & prophecying etc of Joseph [Smith] together with the reasons why I took the course which I was resolved to do, and renounced the Book of Mormon with the whole scene of lying and deception practiced by J[oseph]. S[mith] & S[idney]. R[igdon] in this church, believ=ing as I verily do, that it is all a wicked deception palmed upon us unawares[.]

I was followed by W[arren]. Parish[,][8] Luke Johnson[9] & John Boyn-

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4. Harris repeatedly declared that he had seen the plates with his "spiritual eyes," or in vision (e.g., III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 4; see also "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection"). The word "imagination" is likely that of Burnett (for a discussion of Burnett's possible influence on the wording of his report, see R. L. Anderson 1981, 155-59).

5. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

6. On David Whitmer (1805-88), see "Introduction to David Whitmer Collection."

7. In 1859 Harris told Joel Tiffany that "no one, save Oliver Cowdery, myself, Joseph Smith, jr., and David Whitmer, ever saw them [plates]" (III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 166). Harris evidently denounced the Testimony of Eight Witnesses as false in the sense that it implied a purely natural and physical experience with the plates. Considering his close association with those eight men, it is doubtful that he intended to deny their individual testimonies. Rather Harris had probably said the eight witnesses "also ... never saw" the plates with their *natural* eyes. This interpretation is consistent with Warren Parrish's report quoted in the introduction. Additionally, Harris seemed to regard the visionary experience of the three witnesses as superior to that of the eight, apparently placing the experiences of the eight witnesses on the level with his seeing the plates through the cloth.

8. Warren Parrish (?-?) was a member of the First Quorum of Seventy (1835-37) and scribe to Joseph Smith until he renounced his membership in 1837 (Cannon and Cook 1983, 280; Cook and Backman 1985, 97).

9. Luke S. Johnson (1807-61) was baptized in 1831, ordained a high priest the same year, was a member of the Kirtland High Council, and or-

ton[10] all of who concurred with me, after we were done speaking M[artin] Harris arose & said he was sorry for any man who rejected the Book of Mormon for he knew it was true, he said he had hefted the plates repeatedly in a box with only a tablecloth or a handkerchief over them, but he never saw them only as he saw a city through a mountain.[11] And said that he never should have told that the testimony of the eight [witnesses] was false, if it had not been picked out of [h]im but should have let it passed as it was—Now br[other] Johnson if you have any thing to say in favour of the Book of Mormon I should be glad to hear it. ... [p. 64] ...[12] there are in Kirtland Esqrs [Cyrus] Smalling,[13] [Joseph] Coe,[14] [Martin] Harris and others who still believe the Book of Mormon &c but discard Joseph [Smith] & Mr Coe proposed an investigation of the subject, and Parish took up on the negative, but I have not heard how they got along with it, I am well satisfied for myself that if the witnesses whose names are attached to the Book of Mormon never saw the plates as Martin [Harris] admits that there can be nothing brought to prove that any such thing ever existed for it is said on the 171 page of the book of covenants [D&C 17:5] that the three [witnesses] should testify that they had seen the plates even as J[oseph] S[mith] Jr & if they saw them spiritually or in vision with

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dained an apostle in 1835. He was disfellowshiped in May 1837 and excommunicated in December 1838. He was eventually rebaptized in Nauvoo in 1846 and migrated to Utah the following year (L. Cook 1981, 110-11; Cannon and Cook 1983, 272).

10. John F. Boynton (1811-90) was born in Bradford, Massachusetts. He was baptized in Kirtland, Ohio, in September 1832, and ordained an apostle in February 1835. He became disaffected during the Kirtland Bank crisis of 1837 and was later excommunicated (Cannon and Cook 1983, 249; McKiernan and Launius 1980, 142).

11. Harris told John A. Clark that he saw the plates "with the eye of faith ... just as distinctly as I see any thing around me,—though at the time they were covered over with a cloth" (III.F.1, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH JOHN A. CLARK, 1827 & 1828).

12. Unrelated material has been deleted.

13. On Cyrus Smalling (?-?), see introduction to IV.C.4, CYRUS SMALLING TO DEAR SIR, 10 MAR 1841.

14. Joseph Coe (1784-54) was baptized and ordained an elder before June 1831, ordained a high priest in 1832, and appointed a member of Kirtland's High Council. He became disaffected during the Kirtland Bank crisis in December 1837 and was excommunicated in December 1838. In 1850 he was living and farming in Kirtland (L. Cook 1981, 86-87; tombstone, North Kirtland Cemetery, Kirtland, Ohio).

their eyes shut—J[oseph] S[mith] Jr never saw them any other ~~light~~ way & if so the plates were only visionary and I am well satisfied that the 29 & 37 Chap[ter]s of Isai[a]h & Ezekiel together with others in which we depended to prove the truth of the book of Mormon have no bearing when correctly understood but are [p. 65] entirely irrelevant—but if any man differs from me I can adopt the lan=guage of Josephus, he is at liberty to enjoy his opinions without any blame from me—we are all ~~well~~ in usual health, my respects to your family & all our old friends, I am with respect yours &c

S. Burnett. ...

We the undersigned certify this to be a true copy of a letter written to Lyman E Johnson by S[tephen] Burnett

Albert Petty[15]
Dimich B. Huntington[16]

May 24th 1838

15. Albert Petty (1795-1869), a wagon builder and gunsmith, was born in Bourbon County, Kentucky. He joined the church in 1835. He resided in Missouri and Illinois, and emigrated to Utah in 1848, helping to settle Manti, Sanpete County, in 1849. He died at Springdale, Washington County, Utah (Jessee 1992, 580).

16. Dimick Baker Huntington (1808-79), a shoemaker, constable, and blacksmith, was born at Watertown, Jefferson County, New York. He converted to Mormonism in 1835. At Nauvoo, Illinois, he served as coroner and constable and was among those arrested for destroying the press of the *Nauvoo Expositor* in 1844. He emigrated to Utah in 1847 and died in Salt Lake City (Jessee 1992, 556).

8.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH R. W. ALDERMAN, 1852

R. W. Alderman, Affidavit to Arthur B. Deming, 25 December 1884, *Naked Truths About Mormonism* 1 (January 1888): 3.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Reuben W. Alderman (1829-1905), a native of Ohio, is listed in the 1880 census of Claridon, Geauga County, Ohio, as a "Shoe Maker" (1880:55). He died at Claridon (Warren and Grosvenor 1985, 628).

In the present affidavit, dated 25 December 1884, Alderman recounts a conversation he had with Martin Harris in Mentor, Ohio, in 1852, wherein Harris described Joseph Smith's method of translation and expressed some resentment toward the Mormon prophet. A superficial reading of Alderman's affidavit might lead one to conclude that Harris also confessed seeing Sidney Rigdon during the Book of Mormon's translation and expressed a belief that Smith and Rigdon had plagiarized Solomon Spaulding's manuscript. A closer reading, however, reveals that Alderman does not clearly attribute the statements about Rigdon and Spaulding to Harris and that Alderman possibly interjected his own speculations into his account of the interview. Regardless, Harris consistently affirmed his belief in the Book of Mormon throughout his life.

In February, 1852, I was snowbound in a hotel in Mentor, Ohio, all day. Martin Harris was there, and in conversation told me he saw Jo Smith translate the "Book of Mormon," with his peep-stone in his hat.[1] Oliver Cowdery,[2] who had been a school-teacher, wrote it down. Sidney Rigdon,[3] a renegade preacher, was let in during the translation. Rigdon had stolen a manuscript from a printing office in Pittsburgh, Pa., which [Solomon]

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1. Harris made similar statements on other occasions (see, for example, III.F.13, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH EDWARD STEVENSON, 1870).

2. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

3. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

Spaulding,[4] who had written it in the early part of the century, had left there to be printed, but the printers refused to publish it, but Jo and Rigdon did, as the "Book of Mormon." Martin said he furnished the means, and Jo promised him a place next to him in the church. When they had got all my property they set me out. He said Jo ought to have been killed before he was; that the Mormon[s] committed all sorts of depredations in the towns about Kirtland. They called themselves Latter-day Saints, but he called them Latter-day Devils.

Claridon, Geauga Co., Ohio
Dec. 25, 1884.

[Signed.] R. W. ALDERMAN.

Witnessed by:
CLARA ALDERMAN,[5]
A. B. DEMING.

4. On the Spaulding theory of Book of Mormon origins, see Bush 1977.

5. Clara S. Alderman, age forty-six, is listed with her husband, Reuben W. Alderman, in the 1880 Claridon, Geauga County, Ohio, census (1880:55).

9.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH DAVID B. DILLE, 1853

David B. Dille, Statement, 15 September 1853, "Additional Testimony of Martin Harris (One of the Three Witnesses) to the Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon," *Millennial Star* 21 (20 August 1859): 545-55.

EDITORIAL NOTE

David Buel Dille (1812-87), a dairy farmer from Ogden, Utah, left his home in the summer of 1853 to serve a mission in the British Isles (1853-57). On the way he visited seventy-year-old Martin Harris in Kirtland, Ohio, and interviewed him. According to Dille, Harris affirmed his testimony of the Book of Mormon and discussed early church history. In his autobiography Dille recalled that Harris became invigorated by his visit and stated to him: "Just let me go with you to England. ... You do the preaching and I will bear testimony to the Book of Mormon, and we will convert all England" (David B. Dille, Autobiography, circa 1886, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah; cf. *Deseret News* [church section], 9 May 1943, 7).

Shortly after his arrival in Great Britain, Dille prepared the following document relating the details of his interview with Harris, which he deposited at the office of the *Millennial Star* in Liverpool. Dille's statement, however, remained unpublished until the recently appointed editor of the *Star*, Asa Calkin, printed it in 1859 under the following note: "From a manuscript found in the *Millennial Star* Office, written by Elder D. B. Dille."

Sept. 15, 1853.

Be it known to all whom this may concern that I, David B. Dille, of Ogden city, Weber County, Salt Lake, *en route* to Great Britain, having business with one Martin Harris, formerly of the Church of Latter-day Saints, and residing at Kirtland, Lake County, Ohio, did personally wait upon him at his residence, and found him sick in bed; and was informed by the said Martin Harris that he had not been able to take any nourishment for the space of three days. This, together with his advanced age, had completely prostrated him. After making my business known to Mr. Harris, and some little conversation with him, the said Martin Harris started up in bed, and, after particularly inquiring concerning the prosperity of

the Church, made the following declaration:—"I feel that a spirit has come across me—the old spirit of Mormonism; and I begin to feel as I used to feel; and I will not say I won't go to the Valley." Then addressing himself to his wife, he said—"I don't know but that, if you will get me some breakfast, I will get up and eat it."

I then addressed Mr. Harris relative to his once high and exalted station in the Church, and his then fallen and afflicted condition. I afterwards put the following questions to Mr. Harris, to which he severally replied with the greatest cheerfulness:—"What do you think of the Book of Mormon? Is it a divine record?"

Mr. Harris replied and said—"I was the right-hand man of Joseph Smith, and I know that he was a Prophet of God. I know the Book of Mormon is true." Then smiting his fist on the table, he said—"*And you know that I know that it is true.* I know that the plates have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice declared it unto us; therefore I know of a surety that the work is true.[1] For," continued Mr. Harris, "did I not at one time hold the plates on my knee an hour-and-a-half, whilst in conversation with Joseph, when we went to bury them in the woods, that the enemy might not obtain them? Yes, I did. And as many of the plates as Joseph Smith translated I handled with my hands, plate after plate.["][2] Then describing

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1. In his subsequent autobiography, Dille quotes Harris as stating: "Do I know that the book of Mormon is true? Did I not hear the voice of god out of heaven declaring that it was truth and correctly translated? Yes, I did, and you know I did, for I see that you have the spirit of it" (LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah; quoted in *Deseret News* [church section], 9 May 1942, 7). The language of Dille's 1853 statement follows closely the Testimony of Three Witnesses: "And we also know that they [the plates] have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true" (see VI.G.1, TESTIMONY OF THREE WITNESSES, JUN 1829).

2. The impression that in addition to seeing the plates in vision Harris had also seen and physically handled them on another occasion is probably incorrect. E. D. Howe reported that Harris "does not pretend that he ever saw the wonderful plates but once" (III.F.6, E. D. HOWE ON MARTIN HARRIS, 1834, 14). On other occasions when Harris held or hefted the plates, they were either in a box or covered with a cloth. Harris, for instance, told Joel Tiffany that he had "hefted the plates many times," the first time in a box (III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 166, 169). Stephen Burnett reported that besides seeing the plates in vision, Harris claimed to have "hefted the plates repeatedly in a box with only a tablecloth or a handkerchief over them" (III.F.7, STEPHEN BURNETT

their dimensions, he pointed with one of the fingers of his left hand to the back of his right hand and said, "I should think they were so long, or about eight inches, and about so thick, or about four inches; and each of the plates was thicker than the thickest tin."[3]

I then asked Mr. Harris if he ever lost 3,000 dollars by the publishing of the Book of Mormon? Mr. Harris said—"I never lost one cent. Mr. Smith," he said, "paid me all that I advanced, and more too." As much as to say, he received a portion of the profits accruing from the sale of the book.[4]

Mr. Harris further said—"I took a transcript of the characters of the plates to Dr. Anthon, of New York. When I arrived at the house of Professor Anthon, I found him in his office and alone, and presented the transcript to him, and asked him to read it. He said, if I would bring the plates, he would assist in the translation.[5] I told him I could not, for they were sealed. Professor Anthon then gave me a certificate certifying that the characters were Arabic, Chaldaic, and Egyptian. I then left Dr. Anthon, and was near the door, when he said, 'How did the young man know the plates were there?' I said an angel had shown them to him. Professor Anthon then said, 'Let me see the certificate!' [p. 545]—upon which, I took it from my waistcoat pocket and unsuspectingly gave it to him. He then tore it up in anger, saying there was

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TO LYMAN E. JOHNSON, 15 APR 1838). In later years, perhaps sensitive to anti-Mormon emphasis on the visionary nature of Harris's experience (e.g., III.F.7, STEPHEN BURNETT TO LYMAN E. JOHNSON, 15 APR 1838; III.F.20, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH ANTHONY METCALF, 1876), some Mormons began introducing physical elements into Harris's visionary experience (III.F.26, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH SIMON SMITH, 5 JUL 1875). Interestingly, Dille's language here is similar to the Testimony of Eight Witnesses: "And as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated we did handle with our hands" (see III.L.13, TESTIMONY OF EIGHT WITNESSES, JUN 1829). Several sources have Harris stating that he saw the angel "turn the leaves over one by one" (III.F.21, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH WILLIAM PILKINGTON, 1874-1875; III.F.13, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH EDWARD STEVENSON, 1870; III.F.23, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOHN E. GODFREY, MAY 1875; and III.F.24, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH OLE A. JENSEN, JUL 1875).

3. See III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 165.

4. See III.L.17, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., AND MARTIN HARRIS AGREEMENT, 16 JAN 1830.

5. See discussion in "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

no such thing as angels now—it was all a hoax. I then went to Dr. Mitchell with the transcript, and he confirmed what Professor Anthon had said."

Mr. Harris is about 58 years' old, and is on a valuable farm of 90 acres, beautifully situated at Kirtland, Lake County, Ohio.

10.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859

"Mormonism—No. II," *Tiffany's Monthly. Devoted to the Investigation of the Science of Mind, in the Physical, Intellectual, Moral and Religious Planes Thereof* 5 (August 1859): 163-70.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Unfortunately very little is known about Joel Tiffany (1811-93), editor and proprietor of the short-lived, New York City-based periodical *Tiffany's Monthly,* other than his being a spiritualist. In 1859 Tiffany published three articles dealing with Mormonism. The first reviews some Mormon beliefs, including pre-mortal existence of humankind and polygamy, and introduces Martin Harris, explaining his early connection with Mormonism and rejection of Utah Mormonism (5:46-51); the second discusses Tiffany's spiritualist theories about Mormon origins (5:119-20); the third records a lengthy interview with Martin Harris in Kirtland, Ohio (5:163-70).

In his first article, Timothy included the following description of Harris:

> We were personally acquainted with Martin Harris, the real father of earthly Mormonism. He was the first associated with the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the one most intimate with him at the time the revelation commenced. Mr. Harris had conversed with us many times upon the subject, giving us the history of its earthly development, and desiring us to write it from his lips. ... Mr. H[arris]. is a great expounder of the Bible, especially of all its dark sayings. He is the greatest stickler for its authenticity as the word of God; and he proves to his own satisfaction, the genuineness of the Mormon Bible from it.
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> "Thus saith the Lord," is with Mr. H[arris]., the highest of all authority; and the end of all further question. He recognizes as of supreme authority, the letter of the Bible, only interpreting it by the Spirit of God that is upon him. His common expression when conversing upon the subject is, "the Lord showed me this," and "the Lord told me that." Observing that he frequently used such expressions, we inquired of him, How we were to understand the Lord showed him certain things, and in what manner He spake with him? He informed us that these revelations came by way of im-

> pression. That he was "impressed by the Lord." We suppose Mr. Harris speaks by the kind of influence and authority with which individuals since his revealments, have been "impressed to speak" and declare "mighty truths" (5:50-51).

In the same article, Tiffany explained to readers: "During the past winter we have investigated thoroughly the origin of Mormonism" (5:50). However, as Richard L. Bushman has suggested, Tiffany's investigation may have been limited by his own concerns as a spiritualist (Bushman 1984, 213, n. 96). Rejecting the popular Spaulding theory as well as other naturalistic theories of the Book of Mormon's origin, Tiffany asserted that "spirits of a peculiar character had something and perhaps much to do with it," and regarded it as "a romance of a very low order, destitute of philosophical, moral, and literary merit" (5:51). In his second article, he repeated the charge that "a band of spirits, of not very exalted character, were concerned in the production of this work," and believed that "Joseph Smith was a medium, and to a certain extent honest, when he translated" (5:119). The spiritualist editor then explained some of the reasoning behind his theory:

> Joseph Smith, junr., was one of a company of money-diggers; and we are obliged to suppose that there was some degree of sincerity among them, or they would not have spent so much time, and performed so much labor, in digging for money. It requires faith to become a money-digger; and there must have been to their minds, some evidence upon which such faith was based. Joseph was the seer. He had a stone, in which, when it was placed in his hat, and his face buried therein, so as to exclude the light, he could see as a clairvoyant. In this manner Joseph looked after money, and it was during one of these seasons of examination, that he obtained his first glimpse of the Golden Bible.
>
> From our examination of the subject, we have no idea that there was any "Golden Bible," or that Joseph Smith, junr., ever found any plates of any kind. But we are of the opinion that he was under a psychological influence, which led him to suppose there was something of the kind, and that psychologically he was made to see, hear, and handle what to him were the "Golden Plates."
>
> The whole thing can be accounted for upon purely psychological principles. Joseph Smith, junr., being what is called now-a-days a medium, and being subject to the influence of such a class of spirits, they could present before his vision anything they chose. The whole band of money-diggers were more or less mediative, and could be easily influenced. ... (5:119-20).

If Tiffany's spiritualistic assumptions led him to view Smith as a misguided medium, or to highlight Smith's money-digging exploits, any suggestion that he misrepresented Harris must be dismissed since, according to Tiffany, Harris was given an opportunity to correct the written version of the interview. Concerning the date and circumstances of his interview with Harris, Tiffany noted in the introduction to his third article:

> The following narration we took down from the lips of Martin Harris, and read the same to him after it was written, that we might be certain of giving his statement to the world. We made a journey to Ohio for the purpose of obtaining it, in the latter part of January, 1859. We did this that the world might have a connected account of the origin of Mormonism from the lips of one of the original witnesses, upon whose testimony it was first received. For it will be remembered that Martin Harris is one of the three witnesses selected to certify to the facts connected with the origin of that revelation (5:163).

The interview appeared in print well before Harris's death and was never challenged.

Mr. Harris says: "Joseph Smith, jr., found at Palmyra, N.Y.,[1] on the 22d day of September, 1827, the plates of gold upon which was recorded in Arabic, Chaldaic, Syriac, and Egyptian,[2] the Book of Life, or the Book of Mormon. I was not with him at the time, but I had a revelation the summer before, that God had a work for me to do. These plates were found at the north point of a hill two miles north of Manchester village. Joseph had a stone which was dug from the well of Mason Chase,[3] twenty-four feet from the surface. In this stone he could see many things to my certain knowledge. It was by means of this stone he first discovered these plates.[4] [p. 163]

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1. Should be Manchester, New York.

2. The Book of Mormon claims to have been recorded in "reformed Egyptian" (1 Ne. 1:2; Mos. 1:4; Morm. 9:32-34). Professor Charles Anthon reportedly said the Book of Mormon characters resembled "Egyptian, Chaldeak, Assyriac, and Arabac" (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 9).

3. The property on which Smith helped dig a well was evidently owned jointly by Clark Chase and his sons Willard and Mason (III.J.35, THOMAS L. COOK HISTORY, 1930, 238; also Quinn 1987, 41, n. 7). Mason Chase (1795-?), between sixteen and twenty-six years of age, is listed in the 1820 census of Farmington, Ontario County, New York (1820:308).

4. This claim is also made in III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 246; III.A.15, HENRY HARRIS STATEMENT, CIRCA 1833, 252; III.H.1, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW,

"In the first place, he told me of this stone, and proposed to bind it on his eyes, and run a race with me in the woods. A few days after this, I was at the house of his father in Manchester, two miles south of Palmyra village, and was picking my teeth with a pin while sitting on the bars. The pin caught in my teeth, and dropped from my fingers into shavings and straw. I jumped from the bars and looked for it. Joseph and Northrop Sweet[5] also did the same. We could not find it. I then took Joseph on surprise, and said to him—I said, 'Take your stone.' I had never seen it, and did not know that he had it with him. He had it in his pocket. He took it and placed it in his hat—the old white hat—and placed his face in his hat. I watched him closely to see that he did not look one side; he reached out his hand beyond me on the right, and moved a little stick, and there I saw the pin, which he picked up and gave to me. I know he did not look out of the hat until after he had picked up the pin.

"Joseph had had this stone for some time.[6] There was a company there in that neighborhood, who were digging for money supposed to have been hidden by the ancients. Of this company were old Mr. Stowel—I think his name was Josiah[7]—also old Mr. [Alvah] Beman,[8] also Samuel Lawrence,[9] George Proper,[10] Joseph Smith, jr., and his father,[11] and his brother Hiram

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1877; and III.J.2, ORSAMUS TURNER ACCOUNT, 1851, 216.

5. Northrop Sweet (1802-?) was born in New York. Before 1828 he had married Elathan Harris, a daughter of Martin Harris's brother Emer. He was baptized by Parley P. Pratt in October 1830 and probably ordained an elder at the same time (cf. LDS D&C 33:15). Soon after moving to Ohio, Sweet received a revelation appointing himself prophet. Separating from the church, Sweet, with Wycom Clark and others, organized a short-lived church called "The Pure Church of Christ." About 1845 he moved to Batavia, Branch County, Michigan. Details of his death are presently unknown, but he was living with his son Hezekiah in 1880 in Bethel, Branch County, Michigan (L. Cook 1981, 48).

6. Since about 1822, according to Willard Chase (see III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 242).

7. On Josiah Stowell (1770-184?), see introduction to IV.B.2, MARTHA CAMPBELL TO JOSEPH SMITH, 19 DEC 1843.

8. On Alvah Be(a)man (1775-1837), see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, n. 151.

9. On Samuel Lawrence, see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, n. 147.

10. On George Proper, see III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, n. 14.

11. On Joseph Smith, Sr. (1771-1840), see "Introduction to Joseph Smith, Sr., Collection."

Smith.[12] They dug for money in Palmyra, Manchester, also in Pennsylvania, and other places. When Joseph found this stone, there was a company digging in Harmony, Pa., and they took Joseph to look in the stone for them, and he did so for a while, and then he told them the enchantment was so strong he could not see, and they gave it up.[13] There he became acquainted with his future wife, the daughter of old Mr. Isaac Hale,[14] where he boarded. He afterwards returned to Pennsylvania again, and married his wife, taking her off to old Mr. Stowel's, because her people would not consent to the marriage.[15] She was of age, Joseph was not.[16]

"After this, on the 22d of September, 1827, before day, Joseph took the horse and wagon of old Mr. Stowel,[17] and taking his wife, he went to the place where the plates were concealed, [p. 164] and while he was obtaining them, she kneeled down and prayed.[18] He then took the plates and hid them in an old black oak tree top which was hollow.[19] Mr. Stowel was at this time at old Mr. Smith's, digging for money. It was reported by these money-diggers, that they had found boxes, but before they could secure them, they would sink into the earth. A candid old Presbyterian[20] told me,

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12. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

13. In late October 1825 Josiah Stowell took Smith to Harmony, Pennsylvania, to search for treasure. The company, according to Isaac Hale, disbanded in mid-November 1825 (see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 8; V.A.1, ISAAC HALE STATEMENT, 1834).

14. On Isaac Hale (1763-1839), see introduction to V.A.1, ISAAC HALE STATEMENT, 1834.

15. Joseph and Emma were married at South Bainbridge, New York, on 18 January 1827. On Isaac Hale's opposition to the marriage, see V.A.1, ISAAC HALE STATEMENT, 1834.

16. This statement is incorrect. Joseph Smith had just turned twenty-one, and Emma Hale was twenty-two at the time of their marriage.

17. This statement is incorrect. Josiah Stowell and Joseph Knight came together to visit the Smiths, but the horse and wagon were Knight's (see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:60-61; and IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 2).

18. On Emma's accompanying Joseph to the hill to get the plates, see, for example, I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:60-61; and I.C.2, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., BLESSINGS, 1834.

19. On Joseph Smith's hiding the plates in the woods near his father's house, see, for example, I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:63-66.

20. Perhaps a reference to Josiah Stowell, a Presbyterian whose property in South Bainbridge included a portion of the "Susquehanah flats."

that on the Susquehannah flats he dug down to an iron chest, that he scraped the dirt off with his shovel, but had nothing with him to open the chest; that he went away to get help, and when they came to it, it moved away two or three rods into the earth, and they could not get it. There were a great many strange sights. One time the old log school-house south of Palmyra, was suddenly lighted up, and frightened them away. Samuel Lawrence told me that while they were digging, a large man who appeared to be eight or nine feet high, came and sat on the ridge of the barn, and motioned to them that they must leave. They motioned back that they would not; but that they afterwards became frightened and did leave. At another time while they were digging, a company of horsemen came and frightened them away. These things were real to them, I believe, because they were told to me in confidence, and told by different ones, and their stories agreed, and they seemed to be in earnest—I knew they were in earnest.

"Joseph did not dig for these plates. They were placed in this way: four stones were set up and covered with a flat stone, oval on the upper side and flat on the bottom. Beneath this was a little platform upon which the plates were laid[21]; and the two stones set in a bow of silver by means of which the plates were translated, were found underneath the plates.

"These plates were seven inches wide by eight inches in length, and were of the thickness of plates of tin; and when piled one above the other, they were altogether about four inches thick; and they were put together on the back by three silver rings, so that they would open like a book.

"The two stones set in a bow of silver were about two inches in diameter, perfectly round, and about five-eighths of an inch thick at the centre; but not so thick at the edges where they [p. 165] came into the bow. They were joined by a round bar of silver, about three-eighths of an inch in diameter, and about four inches long, which, with the two stones, would make eight inches.

"The stones were white, like polished marble, with a few gray streaks. I never dared to look into them by placing them in the hat, because Moses said that 'no man could see God and live,' and we could see anything we wished by looking into them; and I could not keep the desire to see God out of my mind. And beside, we had a command to let no man look into them, except by the command of God, lest he should 'look aught and perish.'[22]

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21. Compare III.G.13, OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, OCT 1835, 196-97.

22. "Now Ammon said unto him [king Limhi]: I can assuredly tell thee, O king, of a man that can translate the records; for he has wherewith

"These plates were usually kept in a cherry box made for that purpose, in the possession of Joseph and myself. The plates were kept from the sight of the world, and no one, save Oliver Cowdrey,[23] myself, Joseph Smith, jr., and David Whitmer,[24] ever saw them.[25] Before the Lord showed the plates to me, Joseph wished me to see them. But I refused, unless the Lord should do it. At one time, before the Lord showed them to me, Joseph said I should see them.[26] I asked him, why he would break the commands of the Lord? He said, you have done so much I am afraid you will not believe unless you see them. I replied, 'Joseph, I know all about it. The Lord has showed to me ten times more about it than you know.'"—Here we inquired of Mr. Harris—How did the Lord show you these things? He replied, "I am forbidden to say anything how the Lord showed them to me, except that by the power of God I have seen them."[27]

Mr. Harris continues: "I hefted the plates many times, and should think they weighed forty or fifty pounds.

"When Joseph had obtained the plates, he communicated the fact to his father and mother. The plates remained concealed in the tree top until he got the chest made.[28] He then went after them and brought them home. While on his way home with the plates, he was met by what appeared to be a man, who demanded the plates, and struck him with a club on his side, which was all black and blue. Joseph knocked the man down, and then ran for home, and was much out of breath. When he arrived at home, he handed the plates in at the window,

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that he can look, and translate all records that are of ancient date; and it is a gift from God. And the things are called interpreters, and no man can look in them except he be commanded, lest he should look for that he ought not and he should perish" (Mos. 8:13).

23. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

24. On David Whitmer (1805-88), see "Introduction to David Whitmer Collection."

25. This statement seems to exclude the eight witnesses (compare III.F.7, STEPHEN BURNETT TO LYMAN E. JOHNSON, 15 APR 1838).

26. Probably a reference to the occasion described by Isaac Hale that occurred about March 1829 (see V.A.1, ISAAC HALE STATEMENT, 1834).

27. See LDS D&C 5:23-31.

28. The first box for the plates, according to Lucy Smith, was supplied by Hyrum Smith (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, 63-69). This box was destroyed by Smith's enemies and another box was subsequently supplied with the help of Alvah Beman (as described by Harris below).

and they were received from him by his mother.[29] They were then [p. 166] hidden under the hearth in his father's house.[30] But the wall being partly down, it was feared that certain ones, who were trying to get possession of the plates, would get under the house and dig them out. Joseph then took them out, and hid them under the old cooper's shop, by taking up a board and digging in the ground and burying them. When they were taken from there, they were put into an old Ontario glass-box. Old Mr. Beman sawed off the ends, making the box the right length to put them in, and when they went in he said he heard them jink, but he was not permitted to see them. He told me so.

"The money-diggers claimed that they had as much right to the plates as Joseph had, as they were in company together. They claimed that Joseph had been traitor, and had appropriated to himself that which belonged to them.[31] For this reason Joseph was afraid of them, and continued concealing the plates. After they had been concealed under the floor of the cooper's shop for a short time, Joseph was warned to remove them. He said he was warned by an angel. He took them out and hid them up in the chamber of the cooper's shop among the flags. That night some one came, took up the floor, and dug up the earth, and would have found the plates had they not been removed.[32]

"These things had all occurred before I talked with Joseph respecting the plates. But I had the account of it from Joseph, his wife, brothers, sisters, his father and mother. I talked with them separately, that I might get the truth of the matter. The first time I heard of the matter, my brother Presarved Harris,[33] who had been in the village of Palmyra, asked me if [I] had heard

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29. Josiah Stowell claimed to have been "the first person that took the Plates out of your [Joseph Smith's] hands the morning you brought them in" (see IV.B.2, MARTHA CAMPBELL TO JOSEPH SMITH, 19 DEC 1843).

30. That the plates were first concealed under the Smiths' hearth is well documented (e.g., I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:67-68; III.D.5, CAROLINE ROCKWELL SMITH STATEMENT, 25 MAR 1885; III.K.12, MARY A. NOBLE AUTOBIOGRAPHY, CIRCA 1834-1836; and IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 1).

31. See also VI.A.17, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH JAMES H. HART, 21 AUG 1883 & 10 MAR 1884; and VI.A.12, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH *KANSAS CITY JOURNAL,* 1 JUN 1881.

32. This was the occasion on which the first box was discovered by Smith's enemies and destroyed (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:68-69).

33. On Preserved Harris (1785-1867), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 48.

about Joseph Smith, jr., having a golden bible. My thoughts were that the money-diggers had probably dug up an old brass kettle, or something of the kind. I thought no more of it. This was about the first of October, 1827. The next day after the talk with my brother, I went to the village, and there I was asked what I thought of the Gold Bible? I replied, The Scripture says, He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is foolishness unto him [Prov. 18:13]. I do not wish to make myself a fool. I don't know anything about it. Then said I, what is it about Joe's Gold Bible? They then went on to say, that they put [p. 167] whiskey into the old man's cider and got him half drunk,[34] and he told them all about it. They then repeated his account, which I found afterwards to agree substantially with the account given by Joseph. Then said I to them, how do you know that he has not got such gold plates? They replied, 'Damn him! angels appear to men in this enlightened age! Damn him, he ought to be tarred and feathered for telling such a damned lie!' Then I said, suppose he has told a lie, as old Tom Jefferson said, it did [not] matter to him whether a man believed in one god or twenty. It did not rob his pocket, nor break his shins.[35] What is it to us if he has told a lie? He has it to answer for if he has lied. If you should tar and feather all the liars, you would soon be out of funds to purchase the material.

"I then thought of the words of Christ, The kingdom divided against itself cannot stand [Mk. 3:24]. I knew they were of the devil's kingdom, and if that is of the devil, his kingdom is divided against itself. I said in my heart, this is something besides smoke. There is some fire at the bottom of it. I then determined to go and see Joseph as soon as I could find time.

"A day or so before I was ready to visit Joseph, his mother came over to our house and wished to talk with me.[36] I told her I had no time to spare, she might talk with my wife, and, in the evening when I had finished my work I would talk with her. When she commenced talking with me, she told me respecting his bringing home the plates, and many other things, and said that Joseph had sent her over and wished me to come and see him. I told her that I had a time appointed when I would go, and that when the time came I should

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34. On Joseph Smith Sr.'s drinking, see I.C.2, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., BLESSINGS, 1834, n. 11.

35. "The legitimate powers of government extend to such acts only as are injurious to others. But it does me no injury for my neighbor to say there are twenty gods, or no god. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg" (Jefferson 1800, 160).

36. For Lucy Smith's account of this visit, see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:70-71.

then go, but I did not tell her when it was. I sent my boy to harness my horse and take her home. She wished my wife and daughter to go with her; and they went and spent most of the day. When they came home, I questioned them about them. My daughter said, they were about as much as she could lift. They were now in the glass-box, and my wife said they were very heavy. They both lifted them. I waited a day or two, when I got up in the morning, took my breakfast, and told my folks I was going to the village, but went directly to old Mr. Smith's. I found that Joseph [p. 168] had gone away to work for Peter Ingersol to get some flour. I was glad he was absent, for that gave me an opportunity of talking with his wife and the family about the plates. I talked with them separately, to see if their stories agreed, and I found they did agree. When Joseph came home I did not wish him to know that I had been talking with them, so I took him by the arm and led him away from the rest, and requested him to tell me the story, which he did as follows. He said: 'An angel had appeared to him, and told him it was God's work.'" Here Mr. Harris seemed to wander from the subject, when we requested him to continue and tell what Joseph then said. He replied, "Joseph had before this described the manner of his finding the plates. He found them by looking in the stone found in the well of Mason Chase.[37] The family had likewise told me the same thing.

"Joseph said the angel told him he must quit the company of the money-diggers. That there were wicked men among them. He must have no more to do with them. He must not lie, nor swear, nor steal. He told him to go and look in the spectacles, and he would show him the man that would assist him. That he did so, and he saw myself, Martin Harris, standing before him. That struck me with surprise. I told him I wished him to be very careful about these things. 'Well,' said he, 'I saw you standing before me as plainly as I do now.' I said, if it is the devil's work I will have nothing to do with it; but if it is the Lord's, you can have all the money necessary to bring it before the world. He said the angel told him, that the plates must be translated, printed and sent before the world. I said, Joseph, you know my doctrine, that cursed is every one that putteth his trust in man, and maketh flesh him arm; and we know that the devil is to have great power in the latter days to deceive if possible the very elect; and I don't know that you are one of the elect. Now you must not blame me for not taking your word. If the Lord will show me that it is his work, you can have all the money you want.

"While at Mr. Smith's I hefted the plates, and I knew from the heft that they were lead or gold, and I knew that Joseph [p. 169] had not credit enough to buy so much lead. I left Mr. Smith's about eleven o'clock and

37. See n. 3 above.

went home. I retired to my bedroom and prayed God to show me concerning these things, and I covenanted that if it was his work and he would show me so, I would put forth my best ability to bring it before the world. He then showed me that it was his work, and that it was designed to bring in the fullness of his gospel to the gentiles to fulfill his word, that the first shall be last and the last first. He showed this to me by the still small voice spoken in the soul. Then I was satisfied that it was the Lord's work, and I was under a covenant to bring it forth.

"The excitement in the village upon the subject had become such that some had threatened to mob Joseph, and also to tar and feather him. They said he should never leave until he had shown the plates. It was unsafe for him to remain, so I determined that he must go to his father-in-law's in Pennsylvania. He wrote to his brother-in-law Alvah Hale, requesting him to come for him. I advised Joseph that he must pay all his debts before starting. I paid for him, and furnished him money for his journey.[38] I advised him to take time enough to get ready, so that he might start a day or two in advance: for he would be mobbed if it was known when he started. We put the box of plates into a barrel about one-third full of beans and headed it up.[39] I informed Mr. Hale of the matter, and advised them to cut each a good cudgel [club] and put into the wagon with them, which they did. It was understood that they were to start on Monday; but they started on Saturday night and got through safe. This was the last of October, 1827. It might have been the first of November."[40]

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38. Harris gave Smith fifty dollars (e.g., I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 9; I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:73; III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833, 246; and III.I.6, JESSE TOWNSEND TO PHINEAS STILES, 24 DEC 1833, 289).

39. Concerning the plates being hid in a barrel of beans, see III.K.11, EBER D. HOWE ACCOUNT, 1834, 18; and V.D.7, RHAMANTHUS M. STOCKER ACCOUNT, 1887, 554-55.

40. Smith says he departed Manchester in December 1827 (I.A.7, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1832, 5).

11.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM W. BLAIR, 1860

William W. Blair, Footnote comment in Lucy [Mack] Smith, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet, and His Progenitors for Many Generations* (Plano, Illinois: Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1880), 131. Reprinted in *Saints' Herald* 35 (12 May 1888): 297.

EDITORIAL NOTE

William Wallace Blair (1828-96) was born at Holly, Orleans County, New York. In 1839 he settled in Amboy, Lee County, Illinois, with his parents. On 8 October 1851 he was baptized by William Smith, brother of Joseph Smith, who began organizing his own church in 1847, but the following year he withdrew from this faction. In 1855 he briefly united with a small group organized by John E. Page, then on 7 April 1857 he was baptized into the RLDS church by Zenas H. Gurley. The following year he was ordained an apostle. In 1860 he was appointed with E. C. Briggs to serve a mission in the mid-West, during which Blair interviewed Martin Harris in Kirtland, Ohio. On 9 August 1860 Blair noted his meeting with Harris in his journal, but recorded no details (W. W. Blair, Journal, 9 August 1860, RLDS Church Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri). In 1873 Blair was appointed first counselor to Joseph Smith III. Blair was living in Lamoni at the time of his death (Knisley 1948, under "Blair, William W."; Smith, Smith, and Edwards 1968, 3:726-31).

In 1860, when conversing with Martin Harris, at Kirtland, Ohio, in respect, to the Book of Mormon and the prophetic mission of Joseph the Martyr, he in reply to direct inquiries, told me that he obtained the one hundred and sixteen pages manuscript of the Book of Mormon from Joseph, and took them to his home, where he read them in the evenings to his family and some friends, and that he put them in his bureau in the parlor, locking both bureau and parlor, putting the keys of each in his pocket, and so retired for the night, after which he never saw them. He seemed to be still conscience-smitten for permitting them to be stolen. He reaffirmed his testimony, in substance, as found in connection with that of O[liver].

Cowdery[1] and D[avid]. Whitmer,[2] in respect to the divinity of the Book of Mormon.

W. W. BLAIR.

1. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

2. On David Whitmer (1805-88), see "Introduction to David Whitmer Collection."

12.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM HARRISON HOMER, 1869

1. William Harrison Homer, "Testimony given by Brother W. H. Homer, January 3, 1922, 5:15 P.M., at 2522 No. Kodaio Blvd., Chicago, the home of his son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Merrill O. Maugh<an>," LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

2. William Harrison Homer, "The Last Testimony of Martin Harris," Affidavit, 10 July 1925, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah. Published in William Harrison Homer, "The Passing of Martin Harris," *Improvement Era* 29 (March 1926): 468-72; also *Improvement Era,* July 1955, 505-6.

EDITORIAL NOTE

William Harrison Homer (1845-1934), a native of Illinois, left Salt Lake City in 1867 to serve a mission in Britain. On his return to Utah in December 1869, Homer, whose sister had married Martin Harris's son, Martin Harris, Jr., visited Harris in Kirtland, Ohio. I have located two accounts of Homer's interview with the elder Martin Harris: the first written on 3 January 1922 and witnessed by J. E. Arrington, and the second on 10 July 1925 in Provo, Utah, and subsequently notarized on 21 December 1925 in Salt Lake City. When a nearly identical version was published the following year in the *Improvement Era,* the editors stated that the original had been signed in the presence of Homer's wife, son, and LDS apostle John A. Widtsoe (1872-1952) and his wife. Homer also visited Harris on his deathbed and subsequently gave an account (see "Martin Harris Addendum").

[*1. Statement, 3 January 1922*][1]

... About the middle of December 1869, I met Martin Harris in the town of Kirtland, Ohio. My object in going to Kirtland was to visit the temple. I found that Martin Harris was the custodian of the keys. On our asking him to show us the temple, he very kindly offered his services. After going

1. My transcription is taken from a typescript of the original.

through the building from the roof to the basement, during which time he uttered a great many abusive words and sentiments against President Brigham Young. I asked him what he now thought of the divinity of the Book of Mormon. His answer was, 'Young man, do you see that sun shining through that window? Just so sure as that sun shines and gives us light by day, and the moon and stars give us light by night, just so sure I know the Book of Mormon is true. For I saw the angel, I heard ~~the~~ <his> voice, I saw and handled the plates upon which the Book of Mormon was written; and by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost, the translation was made by the Prophet Joseph Smith, whom I know by the power and gift of the Holy Ghost, was a true Prophet of God, chosen to open up the last dispensation—or the dispensation of the fullness of times, when all things shall be gathered into one.' ...[2]

Signed W. H. Homer.

Witnessed by J. E. Arrington.

[*2. Statement, 10 July 1925*][3]

I first saw Martin Harris in Kirtland, Ohio, about the last of December, 1869. On my return from a mission in England I stopped to visit one of my relatives in Pennsylvania. On resuming my journey one of my cousins, James A. Crockett,[4] came as far as Kirtland, Ohio, with me. We remained in Kirtland over night and the next morning, after breakfast, we asked the landlord who was custodian of the Mormon Temple at Kirtland<,> and he informed us that Martin Harris was custodian, and pointed out to us where we would find the old gentleman. Accordingly we went to the door and knosked [knocked]. In answer to our knock there came to the door of the cottage a poorly clad, emaciated little man, on whom the winter of life was weighing heavily. It was Martin Harris. In his face might be read the story of his life. There were the marks of spiritual upliftment. There were the marks of keen dissappointment. There was the hunger strain for the peace, the contentment, the divine calm that it seemed could come no more into

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2. For Homer's account of Harris's deathbed statement, see "Martin Harris Addendum."

3. This document is typed, signed, and notarized. It includes corrections in ink, apparently in preparation for publication. An almost identical affidavit, dated 9 April 1927, Provo, Utah, and notarized before J. W. Robinson, is located in Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

4. The *Improvement Era* adds: "who was not a member of the Church."

his life. It was a pathetic figure, and yet it was a figure of strength. For with it all there was something about the little man which revealed the fact that he had lived richly, that into his life had entered such noble experiences as come to the lives of but few. <¶> I introduced myself modestly as a brother-in-law of Martin Harris, Jr., as he had married my eldest sister. And as an Elder of the Church I was returning from a foreign mission. The effect of the introduction was electric. The fact of relationship was overwhelmed by the fact of Utah citizenship. The old man bristled with vindictiveness. "One of those Brighamite Mormons, are you?" he snapped. Then he railed [i *w.o.* l] impatiently against Utah and the founder of the Mormon Commonwealth. It was in vain that I tried to turn the old man's attention to his [p. 1] family. Martin Harris seemed to be obsessed. He would not understand that there stood before him a man who knew his own wife and children.[5]

After some time, however, the old man said, "You want to see the Temple, do you?" "Yes, indeed," I exclaimed, "If we may." "Well, I'll get the key." From that moment, Martin Harris, in spite of occasional outbursts, radiated with in=terest. He led us through the rooms of the Temple and explained how they were used. He pointed out the place of the School of the Prophets. He showed where the Temple curtain had at one time hung. He related thrilling experiences in connection with the history of the sacred building. In the basement, as elsewhere, there were many signs of dilapidation. The plaster was fallen off the ceilings and the walls; windows were broken; the woodwork was stained and marred. Whether it was the in=fluence of these conditions or not, it is difficult to tell, but here again, Martin Harris was moved to speak against the Utah Mormons. An injustice, a gross injustice had been done to him. He should have been chosen President of the Church.

When the old man was somewhat exhausted, I asked, "Is it not true that you were once very prominent in the Church, that you gave liberally of your means; and that you were active in the performance of your duties?" "That is very true," replied Martin Harris, "Things were alright then. I was honored while the people were here<,> but now that I am old and poor it is all different."

"Really," replied I, "How can that be? What about your testimony of the Book of Mormon? Do you still believe that the Book of Mormon is true and that Joseph Smith was a Prophet?" <¶> Again the effect was electric. A changed old man stood before me. It was no longer a man with an imagined grievance. It was a man with [p. 2] a message, a man with a noble conviction

5. The *Improvement Era* adds: "who had followed the Church to Utah."

in his heart, a man inspired of God and endowed with divine knowledge. Through the broken window of the Temple sho~~wn~~<ne> the winter sun, clear and radiant.

"Young man," answered Martin Harris with impressiveness. "Do I believe it! Do you see the sun shining? Just as surely as the sun is shining on us by day, just as surely as the breath of life sustains us, so surely do I know that Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God[6]; so surely do I know that the Book of Mormon was divinely translated. I saw[7] the plates, I saw the angel. I heard the voice of God. I know that the Book of Mormon is true."[8] <¶> It was a sublime moment. It was a wonderful testimony. We were thrilled to the very roots of our hair. The shabby, emaciated little man before us was transformed [f *w.o.* r; o *w.o.* f] as he stood with hand outstretched toward the sun of heaven. A halo seemed to encircle him. A divine fire glowed in his eyes. His voice throbbed with the sincerity and the conviction of his message. It was the real Martin Harris whose burning testimony no power on earth could quench.[9]

Martin Harris was now in a softer mood. He turned to me and asked<,> "Who are you?" I explained again our relationship. "So my son Martin married your sister," repeated the old man, shaking my hand. "You know my family then?" "Yes," replied I [I *w.o.* it]. "Wouldn't you like to see your family again?" "I should like to see Caroline and the children<,>" mused Martin, naming over the children. "But I cannot; I am too poor." "That need not stand in the way," answered I. <">President Young would be only too [t *w.o.* g] glad to furnish means to convey you to Utah." "Don't talk Brigham Young<,>" warned Harris. "He would not do anything that was right." "Send him a message by me<,>" persisted I, now deeply concerned in the project. "No<,>" [p. 3] declared Harris emphatically. "Yet I should like to see my family." "Then en=trust me with the message<,>" pleaded I. Martin Harris paused. "Well," he said slowly, "I believe I will. You call

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6. The *Improvement Era* adds: "chosen of God to open the last dispensation of the fulness of times."

7. Homer's 1927 affidavit adds above the line: "... and handled ..."

8. The *Improvement Era* adds: "and that Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God, I might as well doubt my own existence as to doubt the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon or the divine calling of Joseph Smith."

9. The *Improvement Era* adds: "It was the most thrilling moment of my life. I asked Martin Harris how he could bear so wonderful a testimony after having left the Church. He said, 'Young man, I never did leave the Church, the Church left me.'"

on Brigham Young. Tell him about our [r *w.o.* t] visit. Tell him that Martin Harris is an old, old man<,> living on charity with his rela=tives. Tell him I should like to visit Utah, my family, my children. I would be glad to accept help from the Church, but I want no personal favor. Wait, tell him that if he sends money, he must send enough for the round trip. I should not want to remain in Utah."[10]

In due time, I reached my home in the Seventh Ward in Salt Lake City. I re=counted to my father the experience with Martin Harris, and we two set out im=mediately to report at the office of President Young. ... [p. 4] ...[11]

[s] W H Homer
(Signed) W. H. HOMER,

R.F.D. Provo, Utah.

Dated [D *w.o.* d]: July 10, 1925.

STATE OF UTAH: | ss.
COUNTY OF SALT LAKE: |

On this 21st day of December, 1925, personally appeared before me W. H. HOMER, the signer of the above document, who duly acknowledged to me that he executed the same.

[s] Samuel [-] Hamlin
Notary Public in and for the State of Utah,
County of Salt Lake, City of Salt Lake.

My Commission Expires
May 25, 1929. [p. 6]

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10. The *Improvement Era* adds: "For 25 years he had nursed the old grudge against the leaders of the Church, probably because nobody had had the patience with him that I had shown. After we had bidden Martin Harris goodbye, and had taken a few steps from the Temple, my cousin placed his hands on my shoulders and said, 'Wait a minute.' Looking me squarely in the eyes he said, 'I can testify that the Book of Mormon is true. There is something within me that tells me that the old man told the truth. I know the Book of Mormon is true.'"

11. Homer's account of his conversation with Brigham Young and subsequent arrangements with Edward Stevenson to bring Harris to Utah the following summer is here deleted. Also deleted is Homer's account of Harris's deathbed testimony (see "Martin Harris Addendum").

13.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH EDWARD STEVENSON, 1870

1. Edward Stevenson to the Editor, 30 November 1881, *Deseret Evening News* 15 (13 December 1881). Reprinted in *Deseret News* 30 (28 December 1881): 763; *Millennial Star* 44 (30 January 1882): 78-79; 44 (6 February 1882): 86-87.

2. Edward Stevenson, "The Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon. No. II," *Millennial Star* 48 (7 June 1886): 366-68.

3. Edward Stevenson, "The Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon. No. III," *Millennial Star* 48 (21 June 1886): 389-91.

4. Edward Stevenson to the Editor, 14 October 1893, *Deseret Evening News,* 20 October 1893. Reprinted in *Millennial Star* 55 (4 December 1893): 793-94.

5. Edward Stevenson, *Reminiscences of Joseph, the Prophet and the Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Edward Stevenson, 1893), 30-33.

EDITORIAL NOTE

While on a mission to the eastern United States, Edward Stevenson[1] visited Martin Harris at Kirtland, Ohio. On 9 February 1870 Stevenson recorded in his journal: "fou[n]d ... Martin harris Who Bore testimony of the angle [angel] [and] Reccords" (Edward Stevenson, Journals, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah). In August 1870 Stevenson returned to Kirtland and accompanied Harris back to Utah. In the following collection of documents, Stevenson recounts the various testimonies Harris gave along the way and during his six-week stay in Salt Lake City before going to Smithfield, Cache Valley, to live with his son.

[*1. Letter, 1881*]

SALT LAKE CITY,

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1. On Edward Stevenson (1820-97), see introduction to I.A.9, JOSEPH SMITH RECITAL TO PONTIAC (MI) SAINTS, OCT 1834.

NOVEMBER 30, 1881.

Editor Deseret News:

Having been interrogated recently regarding Martin Harris, ... I feel prompted to offer a few facts relating to his removal from Ohio to Utah, his various testimonies, and incidents of personal observation of his life for the past 48 years.

While I was living in Michigan, then a Territory, in 1833 [1834], near the town of Pontiac, Oakland Co., Martin Harris came there and in a meeting where I was present bore testimony of the appearance of an angel exhibiting the golden plates and commanding him to bear a testimony of these things to all people whenever opportunity was afforded him to do so; and I can say that his testimony had great effect in that vicinity. ...

In the year 1869 I was appointed to a mission to the United States. Having visited several of the Eastern States, I called at Kirtland, Ohio, to see the first Temple that was built by our people in this generation. While there, I again met Martin Harris, soon after coming out of the Temple. He took from under his arm a copy of the Book of Mormon, the first edition, I believe, and bore a faithful testimony, just the same as that I heard him bear 36 years previous. He said that it was his duty to continue to lift up his voice as he had been commanded to do in defense of the Book that he held in his hand, and offered to prove from the Bible that just such a book was to come forth out of the ground, and that, too, in a day when there were no prophets on the earth, and that he was daily bearing testimony to many who visited the Temple.[2] ...

After my arrival in Utah in 1870, I was inspired to write to Martin Harris, and soon received a reply, that the Spirit of God, for the first time prompted him to go to Utah. Several letters were afterwards exchanged. President Brigham Young, having read the letter, through President G[eorge]. A. Smith, requested me to get up a subscription, and emigrate Martin to Utah, he subscribing twenty-five dollars for that purpose. Having raised the subscription to about $200, on the 19th of July, 1870, I took the railroad cars for Ohio, and on the 10th of August, filled my appointment, preaching twice in the Kirtland Temple, finding Martin Harris elated with his prospective journey. ...

After visiting New York and calling to visit the sacred spot from where the plates were taken upon which the characters of the Book of

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2. See III.F.12, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM HARRISON HOMER, 1869.

Mormon were engraven, I found there an aged gentleman, 74 years old, who knew Martin Harris, and said that he was known in that neighborhood as an honest farmer, having owned a good farm three miles from that place. He further said, he well remembered the time when the Mormons used to gather at Mormon Hill, as he termed it, where it was said the plates came from.

On the 21st of August, Martin was with me in Chicago, and at the American Hotel bore testimony to a large number of people, of the visitation of the angel, etc. ...[3]

While in Des Moines, the capitol of Iowa, Bro. Harris had opportunity of bearing testimony to many, and at a special meeting held in a branch of our Church, Bro. James M. Ballinger,[4] President, Bro. Harris bore a strong testimony as to viewing the plates, the angel's visit, and visiting Professor Anthony,[5] with characters from the plates, who after giving him a certificate, etc., as to the correctness of the characters, asked him to fetch the plates for him to see. Martin said that they were sealed, and that an angel had forbidden them to be exhibited. Mr. Anthony then called for the certificate, tore it up and consigned it to the waste basket, saying, angels did not visit in our days, etc.

On the following day I baptized a sister to President Ballinger, in the Des Moines River. The Branch here contributed a new suit of clothes to Bro. Harris, for which he felt to bless them. On the 29th of August we landed in Ogden [Utah]. ...[6]

[*On 4 September 1870, at a Sunday meeting in Salt Lake City:*][7] Martin Harris related an instance that occurred during the time that he wrote that portion of the translation of the Book of Mormon, which he was favored to write direct from the mouth of the Prophet Joseph Smith. He said that the Prophet possessed a seer stone, by which he was enabled to translate as well as from the Urim and Thummim, and for convenience he then used the seer stone. Martin explained the translating as follows: By aid of the seer stone,

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3. Then follows an excerpt from the *Iowa State Register* (see III.F.14, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH *IOWA STATE REGISTER,* 28 AUG 1870).

4. I have been unable to learn anything further about this individual.

5. On Charles Anthon (1797-1867), see introduction to V.D.2, CHARLES ANTHON TO E. D. HOWE, 17 FEB 1834.

6. Several excerpts from local newspapers announcing Harris's arrival at Ogden and Salt Lake City have been deleted.

7. On this day Stevenson also wrote as Harris dictated his testimony (see III.F.15, MARTIN HARRIS TESTIMONY, 4 SEP 1870).

sentences would appear and were read by the Prophet and written by Martin, and when finished he would say, "Written," and if correctly written, that sentence would disappear and another appear in its place, but if not written correctly it remained until corrected, so that the translation was just as it was engraven on the plates, precisely in the language then used.[8] Martin said, after continued translation they would become weary and would go down to the river and exercise by throwing stones out on the river, etc. While so doing on one occasion, Martin found a stone very much resembling the one used for translating, and on resuming their labor of translation, Martin put in place the stone that he had found. He said that the Prophet remained silent unusually and intently gazing in darkness, no traces of the usual sentences appearing. Much surprised, Joseph exclaimed, "Martin! What is the matter? All is as dark as Egypt." Martin's countenance betrayed him, and the Prophet asked Martin why he had done so. Martin said, to stop the mouths of fools, who had told him that the Prophet had learned those sentences and was merely repeating them, etc.

Martin said further that the seer stone differed in appearance entirely from the Urim and Thummim that was obtained with the plates, which were two clear stones set in two rims, very much resembled spectacles, only they were larger. Martin said there were not many pages translated while he wrote; after which Oliver Cowdery[9] and others did the writing. ...

Bro. Martin visited many of the wards, continuing to bear his testimony both of what he had beheld with his own eyes, and verily knew to be true. He publicly said that many years ago, in Ohio, a number of persons combined [and] sought to get Martin to drink wine for the purpose of crossing him in his testimony. At the conclusion they asked him if he really believed the testimony that he had signed in the Book of Mormon to be true; he replied, no he did not believe it, but, much to their surprise, he said he *knew* it to be true.

Soon after receiving his blessings in the house of the Lord, he went to Smithfield, Cache Valley, and lived with his son until he left this mortal life. Just before he breathed his last he sat up in his bed holding the Book of Mormon in his hand, and bore his last testimony to those who were present.[10]

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8. On the method of translating the Book of Mormon, see Lancaster 1990; and Van Wagoner and Walker 1982.

9. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

10. Harris remained briefly in Salt Lake City with his grandniece, Irinda Crandall McEwan, then went to Smithfield to live with Martin Harris, Jr., his oldest son by his second wife, Caroline Young. In 1874 he moved to Clarkston, where he died the following year (R. L. Anderson 1981, 114-15).

EDWARD STEVENSON.

[*2. Article, 1886, Part I*]

In the year 1870 [1869], I was called to perform a mission to the United States, and in the course of my journey I called at Kirtland, Ohio, to see the Temple, this being the first one built by the Latter-day Saints. It was at this time that I met Martin Harris again, after a lapse of thirty-six years. It was customary for him to avail himself of every opportunity to bear testimony to all strangers, and those visiting Kirtland and the Temple, believing it to be his special duty to do so, as he had been commanded by the angel of the Lord. It certainly was a great pleasure to me to find him still constant in his testimony, and in my heart I felt to pity him in his declining years, in his future prospects and hopes, and I felt to admonish him to the renewal of his duties and more advanced privileges of gathering to Zion and receiving his endowments and blessings. He seemed impressed, and said whatever befell him he knew that Joseph was a Prophet, for he had not only proved it from the Bible but that he had stood with him in the presence of an angel, and he also knew that the Twelve Apostles were chosen of God. ... In 1871 [1870], after my return home to Utah, I was divinely impressed to write to Martin Harris, and his reply was very favorable, he being inspired and impressed that it was his duty to gather up with the Saints, and become identified with the advanced work of God. The letter met the approval of President [Brigham] Young, and a subscription was taken up, in which many participated, a list of whom I still retain. When about sufficient was subscribed it was presented to President Young, who endorsed it with $25, and I proceeded to New York, procured tickets, visited the hill Cumorah, and called for my charge at Kirtland, Ohio, finding Martin Harris anxiously waiting. ...

The following day, Sunday, after my arrival in Kirtland, the Temple was opened to me with permission to preach in it, and a vote was taken for a second meeting in the afternoon, which was well attended. At our hotel in Chicago, where we laid over one day, Martin bore his testimony to several crowds gathered around to see "the man who had seen an angel." All seemed astonished to hear him relate the vision with a force and will hard to gainsay.

On our arrival at Des Moines, the capital of Iowa, where there was

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For Harris's deathbed statements, see III.F.21, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH WILLIAM PILKINGTON, 1874-1875; III.F.24, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH OLE A. JENSEN, JUL 1875; and III.F.26, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH SIMON SMITH, 5 JUL 1875.

a Branch of the Church presided over by J. M. Ballinger, we rested a few days, and a new suit of clothes very much helped the feelings and appearance of the old gentleman. I took him to the leading newspaper office of the capital, and after being questioned, Martin bore his testimony to the editor and others, which was published with very favorable notice of the remarkable man who claimed to have stood in the presence of an angel in this our day.[11] It was remarkable that he was bright and smart for one of his years (about eighty). Martin also bore his testimony at a meeting, the audience listening to him with marked attention. The following day we baptized a Mrs. Fifield,[12] in the Des Moines river, and proceeded on our journey to Salt Lake City, where Martin Harris bore [p. 366] his testimony in the Tabernacle to a densely crowded house, and was listened to with almost breathless silence. Here again I was witness once more to the faithful, earnest testimony of his standing in the presence of the angel, hearing his voice and seeing the plates, &c. He accompanied me to several other meetings, and every time he was unequivocating in his firmness and testimony. Many interesting incidents were related by Martin on our journey, one of which I will relate. He said that on one occasion several of his old acquaintances made an effort to get him tipsy by treating him to some wine. When they thought he was in a good mood for talk, they put the question very carefully to him: "Well, now, Martin, we want you to be frank and candid with us in regard to this story of your seeing an angel and the golden plates of the Book of Mormon that are so much talked about. We have always taken you to be an honest, good farmer and neighbor of ours, but could not believe that you ever did see an angel. Now Martin, do you really believe that you did see an angel when you were awake?" No, said Martin, I do not believe it. The anticipation of the delighted crowd at this exclamation may be imagined. But soon a different feeling prevailed when Martin Harris, true to his trust, said, "Gentlemen, what I have said is true, from the fact that my belief is swallowed up in knowledge; for I want to say to you that as the Lord lives I do

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11. On 29 August 1870 Des Moines's *Iowa State Register* printed Harris's testimony (see III.F.14, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH *IOWA STATE REGISTER,* AUG 1870).

12. Of Mrs. Fifield, James M. Ballinger's sister, nothing further is known. According to Ballinger's note which he appended to Stevenson's letter to his wife, the baptism occurred on 23 August 1870 (see Edward Stevenson to Elizabeth Stevenson, 24 August 1870, 2, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah).

know that I stood with the Prophet Joseph Smith in the presence of the angel, and it was in the brightness of day." Martin Harris related this circumstance to me substantially as I give it, adding that, although he drank wine with them as friends, he always believed in temperance and sobriety. ... [p. 367]

EDWARD STEVENSON. [p. 368]

[*3. Article, 1886, Part II*]

... This calls to my mind a little incident or two that he [Martin Harris] related to me while we were on our journey from Ohio to Utah. He said that Joseph Smith, the Prophet, was very poor, and had to work by the day for his support, and he (Harris) often gave him work on his farm, and that they had hoed corn together many a day, Brother Harris paying him fifty cents per day. Joseph, he said, was good to work and jovial and they often wrestled together in sport, but the Prophet was devoted and attentive to his prayers. Brother Harris gave Joseph $50 (£10) on one occasion to help translate the Book of Mormon. This action on the part of Martin Harris so displeased his wife that she threatened to leave him. Martin said that he knew this to be the work of God, and that he should keep the commandments of the Lord, whatever the results might be. His wife, subsequently, partially separated from him, which he patiently endured for the Gospel's sake. He also stated that the Prophet translated a portion of the Book of Mormon, with the seer stone in his possession. The stone was placed in a hat that was used for that purpose, and with the aid of this seer stone the Prophet would read sentence by sentence as Martin wrote, and if he made any mistake the [p. 389] sentence would remain before the Prophet until corrected, when another sentence would appear. When they became weary, as it was continuing work to translate from the plates of gold, they would go down to the river and throw stones into the water for exercise. Martin on one occasion picked up a stone resembling the one with which they were translating, and on resuming their work Martin placed the false stone in the hat. He said that the Prophet looked quietly for a long time, when he raised his head and said: "Martin, what on earth is the matter, all is dark as Egypt." Martin smiled and the seer discovered that the wrong stone was placed in the hat. When he asked Martin why he had done so he replied, to stop the mouths of fools who had declared that the Prophet knew by heart all that he told him to write, and did not see by the seer stone; when the true stone was placed in the hat, the translation was resumed, as usual.

At an evening visit of some of my friends at my residence in Salt Lake

City, to see and hear Brother Harris relate his experience (which always delighted him) Brother James T. Woods,[13] who is now present while I am writing this article, reminds me that himself and G[eorge]. D. Keaton[14] were present on that occas[i]on, and asked him to explain the manner in which the plates containing the characters of the Book of Mormon were exhibited to the witnesses. Brother Harris said that the angel stood on the opposite side of the table on which were the plates, the interpreters, &c., and took the plates in his hands and turned them over. To more fully illustrate this to them, Brother Martin took up a book and turned the leaves over one by one. The angel declared that the Book of Mormon was correctly translated by the power of God and not of man, and that it contained the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Nephites, who were a branch of the lost sheep of the House of Israel, and had come from the land of Jerusalem to America. The witnesses were required to bear their testimony of these things, and of this open vision to all people, and he (Harris) testified, not only to those present but to all the world, that these things were true, and before God whom he expected to meet in the day of Judgment he lied not. Brother Woods testified that he was present at the time above mentioned, and to him it was marvelous to see the zeal that was manifested by Martin Harris, and the spirit of the Lord that accompanied his words.

That Martin Harris was very zealous, somewhat enthusiastic, and what some would term egotistical, is no doubt the case; but the Lord has shown this generation that He can carry on His work independently of all men, only as they live closely and humbly before Him. ... [p. 390] ...

EDWARD STEVENSON. [p. 391]

[*4. Article, 1893*]

Martin Harris said to me, while I was bringing him from Kirtland, Ohio, in 1871 [1870], to Utah, "Why, when I handed the seven lines of characters to Professor Anthon, who received me so kindly, he pronounced the characters to be a true language, and gave me a certificate to that effect.[15] I proudly started for the door, and while holding the door knob

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13. There are two people named James Woods in the 1870 Salt Lake City census: one a thirty-year-old store clerk from England, the other a thirty-seven-year-old wood turner also from England.

14. George Dennis Keaton, Jr. (1828-?), was born in England. He served as president of the French mission, 1856-58 (Jenson 1971, 4:336).

15. Elsewhere Stevenson reported that Martin Harris told him that Anthon "pronounced them correct Egyptian characters, but somewhat changed,

the professor called to me, asking, 'Where did you find the book?' 'Near Palmyra, sir, in a hill.' 'Then bring me the book and I will translate it for you.' 'No, I cannot do so, for a part of it is sealed.' Then said Professor Anthon, 'I cannot read a sealed book.'" In our conversations while journeying over the plains, Martin Harris said to me, "I did not know until after we read more fully the sacred scriptures that I really had to take these seven lines as the words of the book which Isaiah so plainly spoke of in the 29th chapter. If Professor Anthon had not called me back, Isaiah's words would not have been fulfilled.

"But the word of God never fails," continued Brother Harris. "See how plain it is, the book, not the words, was to be delivered to the unlearned, and when Joseph received the book, he was so unlearned that he did not know that Jerusalem was a walled city until explained.[16] Again you may see above the seven lines, written by him, 'caracters,' instead of characters.[17] He was a poor speller and unlearned, for he was only a poor boy and had to work hard for his living. He lived close by my farm, and often worked for me hoeing corn for fifty cents a day, which was the biggest wages given in those times. But Joseph was naturally quick to learn and soon picked up and educated himself, for he found himself obliged to do so; but I can testify that the Prophet Joseph told the truth about the book being delivered as it really reads, 'and the book is delivered to him who is not learned.' Still further on this same chapter says there is to be a vision connected with this work, and I can prove by the Bible the truth of the work, as well as being an eye witness, for I saw the book in the angel's hands and I also heard his voice, and I bear my testimony to you that I saw his words were fulfilled by my taking the words of a book to the professor, although I did not know it at the time."

[*5. Reminiscences, 1893*]

... I was personally favored with many conversations with the three witnesses whom God raised up, one of whom was Martin Harris, a near neighbor of Joseph Smith. In 1871 [1870], while I was emigrating Martin Harris from Kirtland, Ohio, during our journey of over 2,000 miles, he related many little incidents which occurred in those early times.

One of the incidents that interested me most was when, on a certain

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and gave him a certificate accordingly" (*Millennial Star* 48 [5 July 1886]: 421).

16. See I.F.1, EMMA SMITH BIDAMON INTERVIEW WITH EDMUND C. BRIGGS, 1856.

17. See V.E.2, BOOK OF MORMON CHARACTERS, DEC 1827-FEB 1828.

occasion, Martin's neighbors prevailed upon him to drink some wine with them with the evident intention of getting him to deny his testimony to the Book of Mormon. Martin drank but little, while his neighbor's partook more freely. When they were in high glee they asked him if he really believed that he saw the angel of which he had testified.

"No," said Martin, "I do not believe it."

"Now," said they, "we know you are an honest man."

"Stop a moment," said Martin, "and properly understand me. My reason for not believing it is that knowledge surpasses belief. Gentlemen, it was in open day when I saw the angel and I testify to you that I know my testimony is true. I do not *believe* it is true; I *know* it is."

The reader can imagine the chagrin that his neighbors felt at this unexpect[p. 29]ed outcome of their efforts to entrap him.

Martin told me that, knowing the indigent circumstances of the Prophet, he felt it was his duty to aid in the great work by giving Joseph fifty dollars to help advance the Lord's work. This occurred just prior to Joseph's leaving Manchester for Harmony, Penn[sylvania].[18] The Lord raised up a friend in time of need. The Lord remembered Martin for the timely aid, although it was many days afterwards. Martin also stated that he had hired Joseph to work for him on his farm many times and paid him fifty cents per day, which was the usual price paid for hired help at that time.[19] He also said that he had hoed corn with Joseph often, and that the latter was a good hand to work.

The Prophet found a short season of rest with his father-in-law at Harmony, Penn[sylvania]., where he succeeded in copying the seven lines of caracters,[20] which, by a previous arrangement, were taken [by Martin Harris] to Professor Anthon, of New York,[21] as explained in the next chapter.[22]

Soon after Martin Harris returned from New York, he commenced to write for the Prophet while he translated from the gold plates.[23] Martin often

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18. According to Joseph Smith, he departed Manchester in December 1827 (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 5).

19. This statement is slightly different than in Stevenson's 1893 article (item 4 above), where it is stated that "fifty cents a day ... was the biggest wages in those times."

20. This occurred between December 1827 and February 1828 (see V.E.2, BOOK OF MORMON CHARACTERS, DEC 1827-FEB 1828).

21. This occurred in February 1828 (see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 9).

22. On page 33 (see below).

23. Harris wrote for Smith from about 12 April to about 14 June 1828 (see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 9).

related to the writer the mode of translation. He said that the Prophet possessed a seer stone as well as the Urim and Thummim, by means of which he could translate the characters. On one occasion Martin placed in a hat a stone very much like the Prophet's seer stone, and after the Prophet had looked an unusual length of time, he raised his head, saying, "Martin, what in the world is the matter? all is dark as Egypt." Martin smiled, and confessed. Joseph said, "Martin, why did you do this?" Martin answered: "To stop the mouths of fools, who tell me you know all this by heart, and are deceiving me." ... [p. 30]

... In the year 1871 [1870] I was favored with the privilege of bringing Martin Harris from Kirtland, Ohio, to Utah. While on our journey, I had many opportunities of conversing with him upon this subject, as well as upon many other incidents which occurred at the early period of the translation. Soon after presenting the seven lines of characters to Professor Anthon, he (Martin Harris) aided the young Prophet by acting as scribe during a portion of the translation. The learned Professor Anthon, after having the lines of characters presented to him, examined them carefully, and gave a certificate stating that they were Egyptian characters and had been correctly translated. Mr. Harris, with the certificate, started to leave, but when he had advanced as far as the door, the Professor called to him, asking where he obtained those plates. Harris replied:

"In a hill near Palmyra, New York."

"Then bring the book to me and I will translate the plates for you."

"I can not do so," said Martin, "for a part of them is sealed."

"Then," replied Mr. Anthon, "I can not read a sealed book," upon which he recalled the certificate and tore it up.

Martin Harris said to me, "At that time I was not aware that the Prophet Isaiah, in the twenty-ninth chapter of his writings, had predicted that those exact words would be uttered and the prophecy thus fulfilled by Prof. Anthon.["] ... [p. 33]

14.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH *IOWA STATE REGISTER*, 28 AUGUST 1870

"A Witness to the Book of Mormon," *Iowa State Register* (Des Moines), 28 August 1870.

EDITORIAL NOTE

While en route from Ohio to Utah with Edward Stevenson in August 1870, Martin Harris was interviewed by a reporter during a stopover at Des Moines, Iowa. Concerning this event, Stevenson reported: "I took him [Harris] to the leading newspaper office of the capital, and after being questioned, Martin bore his testimony to the editor and others, which was published with very favorable notice of the remarkable man who claimed to have stood in the presence of an angel in this our day" (see III.F.13, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH EDWARD STEVENSON, 1870).

The main facts, or the fiction, as the case may be, relative to the discovery of the golden plates from which was translated the present Book of Mormon, are doubtless as familiar to many of our readers as to ourselves. None of us can claim to have been eye witnesses, and few have heard the incidents connected therewith related by those who do claim to have been there, to have seen and handled the tablets of gold, and afterwards, under Divine commission, to have assisted in the translation of the mystic characters inscribed upon them.

A few days since we acknowledged a call at our sanctum, from Martin Harris, who was on his way from Ohio to take up his residence at Salt Lake City, to spend the remainder of his days with the "chosen people." Mr. Harris was now in his 88th year, though still quite vigorous and sprightly, and he is Mormon, soul and body. He, as he claims, and as Mormons claim, together with two others, Oliver Cowdry[1] deceased, and David Whitmore,[2] now an apostate living in Missouri, were the divinely appointed witnesses to the Book of Mormon. The old gentleman evidently loves to relate the incidents

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1. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

2. On David Whitmer (1805-88), see "Introduction to David Whitmer Collection."

with which he was personally connected, and he does it with wonderful enthusiasm.

In September, 1828 [1827], as the story goes, Joseph Smith, directed by an angel, proceeded to a spot, about four miles from Palmyra, New York, and upon the point of a hill, extending northward, dug up a very solid stone chest, within which were the tablets of gold, inscribed with characters which no man could read. Joseph Smith was the first to handle the tablets, and Martin Harris, one of the appointed witnesses, the second.[3] Mr. Harris describes the plates as being of thin leaves of gold, measuring seven by eight inches, and weighing altogether, from forty to sixty pounds. There was also found in the chest, the urim and thummim, by means of which the writing upon the plates was translated, but not until after the most learned men had exhausted their knowledge of letters in the vain effort to decipher the characters.[4]

It had been revealed to Joseph Smith that the writing upon the tablets contained a history of the aborigines of this country down to the time of Columbus' discovery, and after, all human means had failed to secure a translation, Smith was commissioned to undertake the task. By means of the urim and thummim "a pair of large spectacles," as Mr. Harris termed them, the translation was made, and Mr. Harris claims to have written, of the translations as they were given by Smith, "116 solid pages of cap [foolscap]."[5] The remainder was written by others.

Soon after the finding of these plates of gold, Mr. Harris sold his farm, of which he owned a large one,[6] and consecrated himself to the new religion, to which he has adhered himself tenaciously throughout a long life, and still adheres to its tenets and advocates its genuineness with all the earnestness of an enthusiast. He believes in the visitation of angels in bodily form, for he has seen and conversed with them, as he thinks, and is satisfied.

The old gentleman related some incidents, which, could one feel that they were verities, would be interesting, but as they seem largely imaginative they lose interest.

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3. This claim is obviously an error since members of the Smith family, Josiah Stowell, and Harris's wife and daughter had handled the plates, either covered by a cloth or contained in a box, before Harris had an opportunity to discuss the matter with Joseph Smith (see, e.g., III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 168).

4. Regarding the learned's inability to read the Book of Mormon characters, see discussion in "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

5. See introduction to III.L.16, BOOK OF MORMON PREFACE, 1829.

6. See III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829.

15.
MARTIN HARRIS TESTIMONY, 4 SEPTEMBER 1870

"Testimony of Martin Harris Written by my hand from the Mouth of Martin Harris," dictated to Edward Stevenson 4 September 1870, Edward Stevenson Collection, Miscellaneous Papers, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

EDITORIAL NOTE

This document was dictated by Martin Harris to Edward Stevenson on 4 September 1870, shortly after their arrival in Salt Lake City from Ohio (see III.F.13, EDWARD STEVENSON INTERVIEWS WITH MARTIN HARRIS, 1870). Harris gives an account of his early religious experiences, his conflicts with sectarians, his becoming a Book of Mormon witness, his baptism by Oliver Cowdery, and his being persecuted for his beliefs. Unfortunately, Harris's account ends abruptly, perhaps indicating the loss of subsequent pages.

Salt Lake City Sept 4 [18]70

Sunday morning

Testimony of Martin Harris Written By my hand from the Mouth of Martin Harris[.] in the year 1818—52 years ago I was Inspired of the Lord & Tought of the Spirit that I Should not Join Eny Church although I Was anxiousley Sought for by meny of the Sectarians[.] I Was taught I could not Walk together unless agreed[.] What can you not be agreed in [is] in the Trinity because I can not find it in my Bible[.] find it for me & I am Ready to Receive it. 3 Persons in one god[.] one Personage I can not concede to for this is Antichrist for Where is the Father & Son[.] [p. 1] I have more Proof to Prove 9 Persons in the Trinity then you have 3[.] how Do you Do So—John tells us of the 7 Spirits sent into all the World [Rev. 1:4]—if ~~up~~ you have A Rite to make A Personage of one Spirit I have of the 7 & the Father & Son are 2 more Making 9—other sects the Episcopalians also tired me[.] they say 3 Persons in one god Without Body Parts or Passions[.] I Told them such A god I would not be afraid of: I could not Please or offend him[.] [I] Would not be afraid to fight A Duel With such A god. the Methodists took their creed from me. I told them to Retract it or I would sue them for

Riley, their Minister made them give it up [p. 2] to me Saying ["]god would hold me acountable for the use I made of it["]—all of the Sects cal[l]ed me Bro[ther] because the Lord had Enlitened me[.] the Spirit told me to join None of the churches for none had Authority from the Lord for there Will not be A true church on the Earth untill the Words of Isa[ia]h shall be fulfilled[1]—When Interrogated <closely> & I told them ["]if Eny church [be] the church of Christ the christians then claimed me[.] But you and sectarien as mutch as Eny other the time has not come for you to take that name. at Antioch they were called Christians in Derision [Acts 11:26]. No thanks for your name.["] So I Remained for there was No authority for the Spirit told me that I might Just as well plunge myself into the Water [p. 3] as to have Eny one of the Sects Baptise me[.] so I Remained untill the church Was organised By Joseph Smith the Prophet[.] then I Was Babtised By the Hands of oliver Cowdrey[,][2] By Joseph Smiths command[,] Being the first after Joseph & oliver Cowdrey—& then the Spirit Bore Testimoney that this was all rite & I Rejoiced in the Established church[.] Previous to my being baptised I became A Witness of the Plates of the Book of mormon in [June] 1829[.] in March [1829] the People Rose up & united against the Work gathering testimoney against the Plates & Said they had testimony Enough & if I did not Put Joseph in Jail <& his father> for Deseption[,] they Would me[.][3] So I went from Waterloo 25 mls [miles] South East of Palmyra to Rogerses[4] [in] [Suscotua?] [Seneca?] Co[unty] N.Y. & to Harmoney Pennsylvania 125 [miles] & found Joseph. Rogers unknown to me had agreed to

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1. Harris perhaps alludes to Isa. 11:11 (see III.F.18, MARTIN HARRIS TO H. B. EMERSON, JAN 1871).

2. Harris was baptized on 6 April 1830, probably in Manchester, New York (see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 82; and IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 3). On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

3. This may have been the same judicial proceeding described by Lucy Smith (see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:95-97; see also III.I.4, NATHANIEL W. HOWELL AND OTHERS TO ANCIL BEACH, JAN 1832). The date was March 1829, since in March 1830 Smith no longer had possession of the plates as mentioned by Harris below. Additionally, Harris apparently attended the Lyon's hearing immediately prior to his March 1829 visit to Harmony, Pennsylvania, at which time Smith received a revelation for him (LDS D&C 5).

4. William S. Sayre apparently met Harris and Rogers on their return trip to Palmyra (IV.D.4, WILLIAM S. SAYRE TO JAMES TO COBB, 31 AUG 1878). The identity of Rogers remains unknown.

give my wife 100 Dollars if it was not A Deseption & had Whet his Nife to cut the covering of the Plates as the Lord had forbid Joseph exhibiting them openley[.] Martins Wife had hefted them & felt them under cover[5] as had Martin & [p. 4]

5. See III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 168.

16.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM WADDOUPS, SEPTEMBER 1870

"Martin Harris and the Book of Mormon," *Improvement Era* 26 (September 1923): 980.

EDITORIAL NOTE

William Waddoups (1840-?) was born at Stowe, Warwickshire, England. He was baptized on 20 April 1856. In 1863 he immigrated to Utah and settled in Bountiful, but in 1874 moved to Lewiston, Cache County, near Martin Harris's home in Clarkston. Waddoups was ordained a seventy in 1865, a high priest in 1885, and a bishop in 1901. On 5 November 1905 he became second counselor to Alma Merrill in the Benson Stake presidency (Jenson 1971, 3:274). According to the editors of the *Era,* Waddoups made the present statement at the "April conference of the Benson stake at Lewiston, Utah, and also at the grave of Martin Harris, Clarkston, Utah, Saturday, April 20, 1918. Present as visitors at the conference who heard the statement were Elder Richard R. Lyman, of the Council of the Twelve, and President Joseph W. McMurrin, of the First Council of Seventy, the latter at the time making a stirring address on the labors performed by Martin Harris."

Edward Stevenson[1] was sent back East to get Martin Harris.[2] One week after the arrival of Edward Stevenson with Martin Harris, in Salt Lake City, Elder Anson Call[3] asked me if I desired to see and meet Martin Harris. I went to Salt Lake City where I found Brother Anson Call and he introduced me to Martin Harris.

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1. On Edward Stevenson (1820-97), see introduction to I.A.9, JOSEPH SMITH RECITAL TO PONTIAC (MI) SAINTS, OCT 1834.

2. See III.F.13, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH EDWARD STEVENSON, 1870.

3. Anson Call (1810-90) was born at Fletcher, Franklin County, Vermont. He was converted in Kirtland, Ohio, and ordained an elder in 1837. He immigrated to Utah in 1848 and became bishop of Bountiful Ward the following year. He died at Bountiful, Davis County, Utah (Cook and Backman 1985, 75; Bitton 1977, 53-54).

To me Martin Harris said: "Sit down on that couch." I sat on the couch as instructed, while Martin Harris stood on the opposite side of the room. Martin Harris then spoke to me as follows:

"Young man, I had the privilege of being with the Prophet Joseph Smith, and with these eyes of mine," pointing to his eyes, "I saw the angel of the Lord, and I saw the plates and the Urim and Thummim and the sword of Laban, and with these ears," pointing to his ears, "I heard the voice of the angel, and with these hands," holding out his hands, "I handled the plates containing the record of the Book of Mormon,[4] and I assisted the Prophet in the translation thereof. I bear witness that this testimony is true."

Martin Harris was at that time but a combination of bones and skin. He was extremely thin. Holding out his hands he said:

"When I was faithful in the Church I was a fleshy, healthy, robust man, and what you see left of me is the fruits of apostasy. Young man, always be faithful and obedient to the presiding priesthood, and you will always be safe."

(Signed) *William Waddoups.*

4. Contrary to the impression here given, Harris had not handled the plates as one of the three witnesses, but rather on separate occasions while they were either in a box or covered with a cloth (see discussion in "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection").

17.
MARTIN HARRIS TO H. B. EMERSON, 23 NOVEMBER 1870

Martin Harris to H. B. Emerson, 23 November 1870, *Saints' Herald* 22 (15 October 1875): 630. Reprinted in *Millennial Star* 39 (1 January 1877): 5.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Although Martin Harris thought he was writing to a man, the person was actually a married woman living at New Richmond, Ohio, and a member of the RLDS church, named Hanna B. Emerson (see Smith, Smith, Edwards 1968, 1:22, 50; R. L. Anderson 1981, 176, n. 13). In the first of two letters to Emerson, Harris reaffirms his testimony of Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon (see also III.F.18, MARTIN HARRIS TO H. B. EMERSON, JAN 1871).

SMITHFIELD, Utah,
Nov. 23d, 1870.

Mr. Emerson, Sir:—I received your favor. In reply I will say concerning the plates, I do say that the angel did show to me the plates containing the Book of Mormon. Further, the translation that I carried to Prof. Anthon[1] was copied from these same plates; also, that the Professor did testify to it being a correct translation.[2] I do firmly believe and do know that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God; for without I know he [Joseph Smith] could not had that gift; neither could he have translated the same. I can give if you require it one hundred witnesses to the proof of the Book of Mormon. I defy any man to show to me any passage of scripture that I am not posted on or

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1. On Charles Anthon (1797-1867), see introduction to V.D.2, CHARLES ANTHON TO E. D. HOWE, 17 FEB 1834.

2. At first, it may appear that Harris here supports the claim in Joseph Smith's 1839 History that Anthon was shown, in addition to the Book of Mormon characters, a translation of them, which Anthon denied (see discussion in "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection"). However, Harris apparently uses the term "translation" in the sense of "transcription." This is made clear when he begins by stating that the "translation" that he had taken to Anthon "was *copied* from these same plates."

familiar with. I will answer any questions you feel like asking to the best of my knowledge, if you can rely on my testimony of the same. In conclusion, I can say that I arrived at Utah safe, in good health and spirits, considering the long journey. I am quite well at present, and have been, generally speaking, since I arrived.

With many respects I remain your humble friend,

MARTIN HARRIS.

18.
MARTIN HARRIS TO H. B. EMERSON, JANUARY 1871

Martin Harris to H. B. Emerson, January 1871, *Saints' Herald* 22 (15 October 1875): 630. Reprinted in *Millennial Star* 39 (1 January 1877): 5.

EDITORIAL NOTE

For background on this letter, see introduction to III.F.17, MARTIN HARRIS TO H. B. EMERSON, 23 NOV 1870.

SMITHFIELD, Cache Co., U[tah]. T[erritory].
January, 1871.

To H. Emerson, dear sir:—Your second letter, dated Dec., 1870, came duly to hand. I am truly glad to see a spirit of enquiry manifested therein. I reply by a borrowed hand, as my sight has failed me too much to write myself. Your questions: Question 1, "Did you go to England to lecture against "Mormonism?"

Answer. I answer emphatically, No, I did not;—no man ever heard me in any way deny the truth of the Book of Mormon, the administration of the angel that showed me the plates; nor the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, under the administration of Joseph Smith Jun., the prophet whom the Lord raised up for that purpose, in these the latter days, that he may show forth his power and glory. The Lord has shown me these things by his Spirit—by the administration of holy angels—and confirmed the same with signs following, step by step, as the work has progressed, for the space of fifty-three years.

The Lord showed me there was no true church upon the face of the earth, none built upon the foundation, designated by the Savior, "The rock of Revelation," as declared to Peter. See Mat. 16:16, 17, 18, verses. He also showed me that an angel should come and restore the Holy Priesthood again to the earth, and commission his servants again with the Holy Gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth. See Rev. 14:6, 7, verses.—He further showed me that the time was nigh when he would "set his hand again the second time to restore the kingdom to Israel," ["]when he would gather the outcasts of Israel and the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth," "when he would bring the record of Joseph which was in the hand

of Ephraim, and join with the record of Judah, when the two records should become one in the hand of the Lord to accomplish his great work of the last days." See Ez. 36 and 37, chap[ters].; also Isaiah 29 chapter; also from the 58 chapter to the end of the book; also Ps. 50.[1]

Question. 2. What became of the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated?

Answer. They were returned to the angel, Moroni, from whom they were received, to be brought forth again in the due time of the Lord; for they contain many things pertaining to the gathering of Israel, which gathering will take place in this generation, and shall be testified of among all nations, according to the old Prophets; as the Lord will set his ensign to the people, and gather the outcasts of Israel:—See Isaiah 11 chapter.

Now, dear sir, examine these scriptures carefully; and should there still be any ambiguity relative to this great work of the last days, write again and we will endeavor to enlighten you on any point relative to this doctrine. I am, very respectfully,

MARTIN HARRIS, SEN.

1. This paragraph should perhaps be read in light of Harris's 4 September 1870 testimony, which gives an account of revelations he received beginning in 1818 (see III.F.15, MARTIN HARRIS TESTIMONY, 8 SEP 1870).

19.
JAMES H. REEVES ACCOUNT, 1872

[James H. Reeves], "Old Newspapers—No. 24," *Palmyra Courier,* 24 May 1872; and "Old Newspapers—No. 25," *Palmyra Courier,* 31 May 1872.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Richard L. Anderson has identified these two items from the *Palmyra Courier* as "the most detailed recollection of the background and personality of Martin Harris" (R. L. Anderson 1981, 96). According to nineteenth-century historian W. H. McIntosh, the series had come "from the pen of James Reeves" (McIntosh 1877, 134). Reeves is listed in the 1860 census of Arcadia, Wayne County, New York, as a fifty-seven-year-old farmer (1860:936).

[*No. 24*: Palmyra Courier, *24 May 1872*]

Martin Harris was born in 1786,[1] and came here with his parents when only eight years old. He inherited the longevity as well as the energy and activity of his mother, of whom it is said that she could spin a day's work at the age of eighty-seven, and as I have never as yet learned of his death, it is safe to mention his longevity, for he was an octogenarian several years ago, and if still living, has hardly attained the age of his mother at her decease. Of those who formerly resided in this vicinity, perhaps there was no man who received so many rebuffs, and whose acts incited so many unfeeling comments as did those of Martin Harris. Until he had arrived at the age of thirty-five years, he was an industrious, hard working farmer, shrewd in his business calculations, frugal in his habits, and what was termed a prosperous man in the world.

Martin Harris received of his father, Nathan Harris,[2] October 5th, 1813, the farm now owned by Thomas H. Chapman,[3] one and one-fourth miles

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1. Martin Harris was born on 18 May 1783.

2. On Nathan Harris (1758-1835), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 50.

3. In the 1840s Thomas Chapman's father, William Chapman, married the widow of John Graves, who had bought the Martin Harris farm from Thomas Lakey (see introduction to III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829). Thomas Chapman (c. 1840-c. 1910), who married

north of this village [Palmyra]. This farm contained 121 acres. Stephen Phelps[4] and Ira Selby[5] were witnesses to the deed, January 4th, 1814 he received an addition from the same of 25 acres; Stephen Phelps and Daniel Twaddell[6] witnesses. December 9th, 1814 Emer Harris[7] deeded an addition of four acres on the east side of Red Creek, making in all 150 acres, the present area of the farm.[8]

Martin Harris married his own cousin, Dolly Harris[9]; a union which, though contrary to laws and customs, proved to be a pleasant one for both until Martin became estranged by the Mormon delusions. On this farm they together toiled early and late from the time of their marriage until the summer of 1828. Shortly previous to this he had become somewhat religiously awakened and began the study of the Bible. He also became quite skeptical, as well as superstitious, believing in miracles, wonderful dreams, spiritual interposition, special providences, &c. He pursued the study of the Bible with great tenacity, committing to memory whole books, and at the time of the Mormon incubation, could quote chapter and verse with surprising correctness. When Joe Smith first revealed to him the wonders of his new religion,[10] it found a fertile soil in Martin's brain, where it took root, and he became an incurable monomaniac in religious matters. Yet only in this was Martin deemed insane; on other subjects he exhibited all of his former

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Jane Throop, eventually owned the portion of the farm where Harris's home once stood. Chapman died in California (see T. Cook 1930, 195, 206-7, 287; U.S. Census, Palmyra, Wayne County, New York, 1860:858).

4. Stephen Phelps was a business partner with Ira Silby in Palmyra (see T. Cook 1930, 91). He is perhaps the same Stephen Phelps listed in the 1820 census of Canandaigua, Ontario County, New York, over forty-five years of age (1820:210).

5. Ira Silby was a business partner with Stephen Phelps in Palmyra (see T. Cook 1930, 91, 105, 266, 283). He is probably the same Ira Silby listed in the 1820 census of Farmington (Manchester), Ontario County, New York, over forty-five years of age (1820:308).

6. Daniel Twaddell is listed in the 1830 census of Marion, Wayne County, New York, in his forties (1830:12).

7. On Emer Harris (1781-1869), see introduction to III.K.20, EMER HARRIS REMINISCENCE, 1856.

8. See III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829.

9. On Lucy Harris (1792-1837), see introduction to III.A.7, LUCY HARRIS STATEMENT, 29 NOV 1833.

10. Harris first learned that Joseph Smith possessed gold plates about the beginning of October 1827 (see III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 167-68).

clearness of brain; he could drive a good bargain, and manage his farming matters as well as ever, only when he had his "spells" on.

The cunning foibles of Joe Smith so preyed upon the superstitious mind of Martin that he became his most efficient tool, and in June, 1828, consented to a contract with Smith in which he was to secure the pay of the printing the Book of Mormon. With this consenting the trouble of Martin began. Had it not been for this I might have closed the record here, there would have been much less notoriety attached to Palmyra as the birth-place of Mormonism, and Martin Harris might have lived and died on his farm instead of becoming an alien from his native place, a wanderer without a home, or, (if not living) filling an unknown grave. But Martin became infatuated with the idea of a new church as described by Joe, and the promise of being an apostle, led him on, contrary to the advice of his friends and the pleadings of his wife who denounced the whole affair as a piece of "ridiculous nonsense." Prior to the printing of the Book, and while Martin was considering the proposition made by Smith in which he was to be paid $1.25 for the books and the first cost would only be about 60 cents, Martin was permitted to take home a portion of the manuscript to read, and during the long winter evenings[11] he would sit by the great open fire-place and study his new text stopping now and then to pour a little inspiration into the ear of Aunt Dolly, who usually answered by telling him to "shut up." This farce became so obnoxious to the good wife, that finally she determined to end it, and, accordingly, one night when Martin was dreaming that "he dwelt in marble halls," Aunt Dolly rose quietly and taking the roll of manuscript, went to the fire-place and laid it between the charred logs, and ere the morning came, it had ascended in smoke through the throat of the great chimney. The next morning Martin sought for the manuscript telling his wife the most fearful consequences would follow its loss; to which she turned a deaf ear, refusing to give any clue to the whereabouts of the paper. This was the final point of their separation, which was mutually adjusted the following summer and a portion of the farm set off and deeded to her exclusively. Martin believed that she had the manuscript or had given it to some other person, which was also the opinion of Smith and his followers, and this suspicion was embodied in the preface of the Mormon Bible, as a safeguard against any future contingency that might arise therefrom. ...[12]

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11. The designation of "winter" is an error since it was in June 1828 that Harris was permitted to take the translation manuscript home with him, losing it soon thereafter.

12. Then follows the preface to the Book of Mormon (see III.L.16, BOOK OF MORMON PREFACE, 1829).

[*No. 25*: Palmyra Courier, *31 May 1872*]

Martin Harris continued for many years in ignorance of the fate of the manuscripts, and I believe that Joe Smith did not live long enough to learn the history of their destruction; that the later editions of the Book of Mormon also contain the same saving preface as given in my last article.[13] This piece of mischief on the part of Aunt Dolly had no beneficial effect on Martin to wean him from the fate that awaited him, but rather impelled him onward. He vowed that he would not allow her in his room and she declared she would never trouble him on that score. So determined were they in occupying separate apartments, that both expressed themselves to the hired man, that if he ever knew of their occupying the same sleeping room, they would give him their best cow.[14]

Now this hired man had some originality about him, and, one night when all was still and very dark without, he took a tin lantern, tied it to a pole, lighted the candle and put it up to Aunt Dolly's window, her room being directly over Martin's. He would slide the lantern along the window-sash, making a noise and then drop it suddenly, putting out the light. Lighting up again, he would repeat the operation and Aunt Dolly was soon heard going down stairs and entering Martin's room, who demanded what possessed her to come there at that hour of the night. That hired man did not fail of having a witness present, and the next morning they relinquished their title to the best cow according to agreement. Martin and his wife settled their points of difference by a division of the property, as I stated in a previous article.

The printing of the Mormon Bible began in August, 1829, and was finished about the same time the following year. Their first and only edition printed here, consisted of 5000 copies, for which Martin Harris was to pay $3,000 and Smith and his followers were to pay him at the rate of $1.25 per copy, which was not a bad investment, providing the contract was fulfilled on their part. But this they failed to do, and in the spring of 1831 Martin was put to his trumps to raise the money wherewith to pay off the mortgage on his farm, which had been put there two years before to raise money with which to start the work. He did not look long, and before me on the table now lies "Articles of agreement made and concluded this first day of April, in the year Eighteen hundred and thirty-one, between Martin Harris of the one part, and Thomas Lakey of the other part, both of Palmyra" &c. The

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13. The "Preface" appeared only in the first edition of the Book of Mormon.

14. See I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:74.

farm was sold for twenty dollars per acre and immediately possession given. One-third of the purchase money was to be paid on the first of May following, and the balance in two annual instalments, payable in the month of October. The purchaser was to have one-half of the wheat on the ground, the other half belonged to Mr. [Flanders] Dike,[15] who had sown it on shares. They bound themselves in this agreement in the sum of $500 and three weeks thereafter the money was paid, bonds given and deed executed by Martin, with only his signature, the instrument being now before me.[16]

Shortly after the completion of the printing of the Book of Mormon, Martin Harris began to sell the work, and was daily seen on the streets, inviting his friends and neighbors to buy. His form was conspicuous, with a grey suit of homespun, his head surmounted by a large stiff hat, while under his arm he carried several copies of the book.

Chade Southwick,[17] the father of W. H. Southwick,[18] resided on the same lot where the latter now does. He was a man who regarded the doctrines of Jno. [John] Calvin in rather a vague light, but as a neighbor and citizen was respected by all. He loved fun, and a good joke was better than dainty morsel.

One day in the spring of '32 [1832], Martin met Southwick on the street crossing near the Hotel, and invited him to buy a book [of Mormon]. It was a wet muddy time and the streets were then in a very primitive condition, in regard to sidewalks, and as the two stood talking, Southwick asked Martin what his position was in the new church. Martin said he was an apostle endowed with power to preach. "Ah! then thee's an apostle, is thee?" said Southwick. "And can thee follow out the injunction of our bible, wherein it says "If they smite thee on one check turn the other?" "Surely I

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15. Probably Flanders Dyke, who married Harris's daughter Lucy (see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, nn. 167 and 168; and introduction to III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829).

16. See III.F.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829.

17. Chade Southwick is listed in the 1840 census of Palmyra, Wayne County, New York, in his sixties (1840:211; also 1830:36).

18. William H. Southwick is listed in the 1860 census of Palmyra, Wayne County, New York, as a forty-five-year-old "Pro[duce] Merch[ant]" (1860:817). Southwick evidently lived in his father's place on Main Street in Palmyra village. He was "a prominent business man" and a justice of the peace for many years (T. Cook 1930, 36, 62-63, 65, 283). Thomas L. Cook's claim that Southwick came to Palmyra in the 1840s is an error since his father, Chade Southwick, is listed in the 1830 census of Palmyra (see n. 17 above).

can," said Martin, at the same turning his cheek up towards Uncle Chade, who gave it a gentle tap with his hand. "Don't you see," says Martin, turning the other and shutting his eyes in a meek manner. This was more than Chade could stand; there was too much fun there to be lost, and drawing his heavy hand he laid Martin sprawling in the mud, his bibles in one direction and his hat in another, while Chade who was lame and used a cane, stumped it for home as fast as he could go, and just made out to escape the hand of Martin, by closing his front door and turning the bolt in the lock. Martin having picked himself up, left his apostolic mantle of charity with the hat and bibles, and ran with all his might to overtake Chade, and now stood leaning over the gate daring the latter to come out; offering all kinds of invectives and illustrating by his motions how he would thrash the ground with him if he dared to put his foot without the gate. Chade did not see fit, however, to go out, he only opened the door slightly and told Martin that he knew what would await him if he came out and he preferred to stay where he was. This only added fuel to the flame and Martin resorted to the office of H. K. Jerome,[19] then a young justice of the peace, and demanded a warrant for Chade Southwick. Jerome after much hesitation on the part of Martin, got him to tell the whole story which looked so ridiculous that he gave vent to a peal of laughter, which was participated in by others present, and so enraged Martin that it was difficult to keep him from administering a flagellation to the young squire. He was induced however, to go and pick up his bibles, assume his apostolic garb and return to his duties. ...[20]

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19. On Hiram K. Jerome (1798-1879), see III.A.11, PALMYRA RESIDENTS GROUP STATEMENT, 4 DEC 1833, n. 36.

20. Reeves continues his account of Harris in the 7 June 1872 issue of the *Courier,* but his indebtedness to previously published sources makes it unnecessary to reproduce here.

20.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH ANTHONY METCALF, CIRCA 1873-1874

A[nthony]. Metcalf, *Ten Years Before the Mast. Shipwrecks and Adventures at Sea! Religious Customs of the People of India and Burmah's Empire. How I Became a Mormon and Why I Became an Infidel!* ([Malad City, Idaho]: n.p., [1888]), 70-73.

EDITORIAL NOTE

He is perhaps the same Anthony Metcalf listed in the 1870 census of Hyde Park, Cache County, Utah, age forty (1870:163). Anthony Metcalf believed he interviewed Harris in "the winter of 1875-6," but Harris had died on 10 July 1875. Since Metcalf visited Harris at Smithfield, Cache Valley, Utah, the interview took place before Harris's move to Clarkston in October 1874, perhaps therefore in the winter of 1873-74.

Martin Harris, who was one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, was living in Smithfield, Cache Valley, with his son Martin.[1] I called to see him and he gave me his history from his youth up. This occurred in the winter of 1875-6. Following is the history as related to me, including all his connections with Joseph Smith, the pretended prophet and the founder of the Mormon church: He told me all about the translating of the Book of Mormon, and said he had given $5,000 towards its publication.[2] He said: "I never saw the golden plates, only in a visionary or entranced state.[3] I wrote a great deal of the Book of Mormon myself, as Joseph Smith translated or spelled the words out in English. Sometimes the plates would be on a table in the room in which [p. 70] Smith did the translating, covered over with a

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1. Martin Harris, Jr. (1838-1913), son of Martin Harris and his second wife, Caroline Young Harris, was born at Kirtland, Ohio. He was baptized in 1858. He married Nancy Ann Homer and died at Lewisville, Jefferson County, Idaho (*Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* 26 [July 1935]: 108).

2. Rather $3,000 for 5,000 copies of the Book of Mormon (see III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829).

3. Regarding Harris's visionary experience with the plates, see discussion in "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

cloth.[4] I was told by Joseph Smith that God would strike him dead if he attempted to look at them, and I believed it. When the time came for the three witnesses to see the plates, Joseph Smith, myself, David Whitmer[5] and Oliver Cowdery,[6] went into the woods to pray. When they had all engaged in prayer, they failed at that time to see the plates or the angel who should have been on hand to exhibit them. They all believed it was because I was not good enough, or, in other words, not sufficiently sanctified. I withdrew. As soon as I had gone away, the three others saw the angel and the plates. In about three days I went into the woods to pray that I might see the plates.[7] While praying I passed into a state of entrancement, and in that state I saw the angel and the plates." Harris told me about his trip to New York and what Prof. Anthon[8] told him. He (Anthon) said the characters were translated correctly.[9] After Harris had told the professor how the plates had been found, the professor said that it was his opinion that he (Harris) was being duped by sharpers, and advised Harris to take care of himself. I asked him if he knew what the prophet Isaiah had said about that event. He said, "No," but that Joseph Smith had shown that chapter to him after his return.

Harris told me that Smith had permitted him to take home a part of the translated manuscript to show his wife and a few friends. It consisted of several chapters. He said that the manuscript was taken out of the house and never returned. That part which was stolen was never embodied in the Book of Mormon.[10] Soon after this happened Joseph Smith had a revelation from the Lord for Martin Harris, threatening Harris with the destruction of himself and property, and misery was to be his eternal doom. Harris further told me that none of this revelation ever came to pass. See Doctrines and Cove[p. 71]nants, Sec[tion]. 18, par[agraph]. 5, or in some of the books Sec[tion]. 41,

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4. This claim is also made in I.F.3, EMMA SMITH BIDAMON INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPH SMITH III, FEB 1879.

5. On David Whitmer (1805-88), see "Introduction to David Whitmer Collection."

6. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

7. Metcalf's account varies from the official and many other versions, which state that Harris saw the plates on the same day but separate from the other witnesses (see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 24-25).

8. On Charles Anthon (1797-1867), see introduction to V.D.2, CHARLES ANTHON TO E. D. HOWE, 17 FEB 1834.

9. Regarding the Harris/Anthon meeting, see discussion in "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

10. See III.L.16, BOOK OF MORMON PREFACE, 1829.

revelation to Martin Harris [D&C 19:32-37]. Harris said that *Joe* Smith (he never called him *Joseph* in my presence) commenced having false revelations soon after, and, in fact, before the church was organized.[11] In or about the year 1833, the servant girl of Joe Smith stated that the prophet had made improper proposals to her, which created quite a talk amongst the people. Joe Smith went to Martin Harris to counsel with him concerning the girl's talk. Harris, supposing that Joe was innocent, told him to take no notice of the girl, that she was full of the devil, and wanted to destroy the prophet of God; but Joe Smith acknowledged that there was more truth than poetry in what the girl said.[12] Harris then said he would have nothing to do in the matter, Smith could get out of the trouble the best way he knew how. Harris further stated that the Kirtland Bank was a swindle, and he would have nothing to do with it. About that time Harris began to lose confidence in Joe Smith, as a man of truth, honor and principle, yet he believed him to be a prophet of God. I asked him how he could reconcile *such* conduct with what *should* be the conduct of a prophet of God. He then showed me what the prophet Isaiah had said: "That God would choose the base things of this life to bring to note things that are [cf. 1 Cor. 1:28]," and claimed that that prophecy had been fulfilled in Joe Smith. Harris had good evidence that Joe Smith was practicing polygamy as early as 1838, five years before the revelation on polygamy was received by the prophet.[13] He also claimed that polygamy, baptism for the dead, and such endowments as were given [in] Nauvoo and Salt Lake City, were no part of Mormonism. I asked him why he had taken his endowments when he arrived in Salt Lake City. He answered that "his only motive was to see what was going on in there." This was said in the presence of James Bowman,[14] of Soda Springs, Idaho, and myself. [p. 72]

Martin Harris asked me to look on his face and see how it was wrinkled with old age. I never knew his correct age, but I understood him to be about ninety years old at that time. He then read that part of the prophet Isaiah, which speaks of some man "whose visage was so marred, more than any other man's, so shall he sprinkle many nations [Isa. 52:14]." Harris said, "I

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11. The same claim was made by David Whitmer (see VI.A.33, DAVID WHITMER, *ADDRESS,* 1887, 30-31).

12. Perhaps a reference to Smith's alleged affair with Fanny Alger in Kirtland, Ohio, in the mid-1830s (see Van Wagoner 1989, 10-11).

13. See Van Wagoner 1989, 4-5.

14. James Bowman, a native of England, is listed in the 1870 census of Soda Springs, Oneida County, Idaho, as a fifty-two-year-old merchant (1870:169).

am that man," and that the vigor of youth would yet return to him, and that he would yet lead the faithful of all the Latter Day Saints back to Zion, in Jackson County, Missouri, and "I know it will come to pass, as well as I know that Mormonism is true." About two years later Harris died. Harris never believed that the Brighamite branch of the Mormon church, nor the Josephite church, was right, because, in his opinion, God had rejected them; but he did believe that Mormonism was the pure gospel of Christ when it was first revealed, and I believe he died in that faith.

21.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH WILLIAM PILKINGTON, 1874-1875

1. William Pilkington to Vern C. Poulter, 28 February 1930, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

2. William Pilkington, "Martin Harris' Dying Testimony Reported by Man at His Side," *Deseret News,* 9 April 1930, 6.

3. William Pilkington, "The Dying Testimony of Martin Harris, As Given to William Pilkington By Martin Harris Himself In Clarkston, Cache County, Utah," Affidavit, 3 April 1934, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah. Last portion of affidavit published in *Deseret News,* 5 May 1934.

4. William Pilkington, Testimony Read at Martin Harris Grave, Clarkston Cemetery, Clarkston, Utah, 19 May 1934, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

5. William Pilkington, "A Biography [Autobiography] of William Pilkington, Jr. written by Himself," 1938, 6-9, 11-12, 16-17, 30-32, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

6. William Pilkington, Address Delivered in the Lewisville Ward, Rigby Stake, 23 April 1939, typescript, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

EDITORIAL NOTE

William Pilkington, Jr. (1860-?) was born at Bolton, Lancashire, England. He immigrated to Utah with his parents in 1874, and settled in Smithfield near the residence of Martin Harris. The thirteen-year-old Pilkington was hired by Martin Harris, Jr., and lived with the Harrises for eighteen months, which included the last ten months of Martin Harris Sr.'s life. Late in life Pilkington wrote the following statements recounting his experiences with the aged Book of Mormon witness. The occasion of his 3 April 1934 affidavit (item 3) and 19 May 1934 testimony (item 4) was his participation in the LDS church's 19 May 1934 Aaronic priesthood pilgrimage to Martin Harris's grave at the Clarkston, Utah, Cemetery (see *Deseret*

News, 19 May 1934, and 26 May 1934).

[*1. Letter to Vern C. Poulter, 28 February 1930*][1]

Smithfield Feb 28th 1930

Mr. Vern C Poulter:

My Dear Brother Poulter[2]:

I received your kind welcome Letter all right, and was more than pleased to hear from you. It always gives me great Joy to have the privilidge of talking of my accquaintance with Martin Harris, one of the Three Witnesses to the Authenticity of the Book of Mormon. I have spoken in a number of Wards in Cache Valley lately, "in part it is as follows."

This is to certify that I William Pilkington was born in Bolton, Lancashire, England, on the 13th day of November 1860 and emigrated to Smithfield[,] Utah, with my Parents in latter part of September 1874, when thirteen years of age. I was soon hired out to work for a man named Martin Harris Jr. who was living in Smithfield, Utah. I soon found out that Martin Harris, Senior, one of the Three Witnesses of the [p. 1] a[u]thenticity of the Book of Mormon was living in the same House, with his Wife and Family, thus it became my good fortune to behold and have the privilidge of conversing with this man who had been favored of God, to the extent of being privilaged to be chosen as one of the three men that stood in the presence of an angel of God, who held in his hands the Golden Plates that Joseph Smith received from the angel Moroni, which contained the contents of what is now called the Book of Mormon of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. I took great pleasure in listening to him relate the part he took in the Early rise of the Church, how he stood in the presence of the angel of the Lord, and after the angel assended into Heaven, he saw the Heaven open and heard the voice of God declare that every thing was correct that the angel had told them, and that the Book of Mormon was translated correctly. I lived with him nearly one year prior to his death, which took place [p. 2] in Clarkston, Cache County, Utah, on the 10th day of July 1875, 92 years of age. I testify to the World, that I held up his right arm while he bore his dying Testimony that he with the Prophet Joseph Smith did stand

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1. The original is written in blue ink apparently in Pilkington's hand. It is probably not the original letter, but a retained copy.

2. At the time Pilkington wrote the letter, Vern C. Poulter was living in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

in the presence of an angel of God, while he held the Gold Plates in his hands, and turned the leaves over one by one and that he saw the Engravings on the Plates, he also saw the Urim and Thummin, the Breast Plate and the Sword of Laban, and after the angel assended into Heaven[,] the Heavens were opened and he heard the voice of God declare that all that the angel had told him was verily true and that the Book of Mormon which contains the Everlasting gospel was translated correctly, while I held his right arm up he also bore his Testimony to the whole World and I thought he could see the whole World. he died the next day, the 10th day of July 1875. I wish I was with you to talk to the people face to face, as I can only give you a [p. 3] little in this Letter of what he told me pertaining to the early rise of the Church as I talked to him hundreds of times. ... [p. 4]

Your Brother in the Gospel of Christ
[s] William Pilkington, Smithfield, Utah

[*2. Published Statement, 9 April 1930*]

I lived in the Martin Harris family nearly one year prior to his death. He used to talk to me very often on the rise of the Church. Scores of times he bore his testimony to me pertaining to the truth of the Book of Mormon. On the above date [9 July 1875] he bore to me his last testimony, as he died the next day.

When I entered the house he lay on a couch in the southwest corner of the room. I walked to his bedside and asked him if he wanted me. He said yes, very feebly. I could see he was dying, so I stroked his hair back and told him not to get excited and the Lord would strengthen his voice so that I would understand what he wanted to say to me. I had talked to him so many times prior to this that if I could get a word now and again I could tell by the movement of his lips what he was talking about. But I could not get that word, so I knelt down by his bedside and prayed to our Heavenly Father to strengthen his servant's voice so that I could understand what he wanted to tell me before he died. In kneeling I had my hand on his right arm as he was lying on his left side, with his head to the west. In attempting to arise from my knees I was in the act of drawing my hand from his arm when he shook his head. I accordingly stayed in that position wondering what he wanted. I then commenced to pray again and the spirit of the Lord whispered to my spirit that he wanted me to hold up his right arm while he bore his testimony.

I asked him if he wanted me to hold up his right arm while he spoke and he said yes. I did so and he once more told me:

"I did stand in the presence of the angel of the Lord with Joseph Smith.

I saw him descend from heaven. I saw the gold plates as he held them in his hands. I heard his voice. I saw the Urim and Thummim. I saw the breastplate. I also saw the sword of Laban. The brightness that enveloped him and us was so bright that I could plainly see the characters on the gold plates. I saw him ascend up into heaven. I heard the voice of God from the heaven declare that everything that the angel had said was true and that the Book of Mormon was translated correctly, and I was commanded by the voice of God to testify to the world what I had seen and heard. I was then overcome and cried out: 'It is enough! It is enough! Mine eyes have beheld the glories of God. Hosannah! Hosannah to God and the Lamb!' and fell on my face on the ground. When I came to, Joseph was lifting me up."

He (Martin Harris) died on the 10th day of July, 1875, at Clarkston, Cache county, Utah, aged 92 years.

(Signed) WILLIAM PILKINGTON.
Smithfield, Utah.

[*3. Affidavit, 3 April 1934*][3]

I first met Martin Harris, "One of the Three Witnesses To The Authenticity of the Book of Mormon," in Smithfield in October 1874. I was hired by his Son, "Martin Harris Jr." to live in the Harris family for one year. Martin Harris Senior was living with his Son. ... [p. 1] ...

When I would ask him Questions pertaining to the Early rise of the Church his Eyes would radiate with interest. he related Experiences in connection with the Translation of the Book of Mormon. he told me it was he who took some of the copied Characters along with the Interpretation "which Joseph Smith had made through the gift and Power of God" to Proffessor Charles Anthon,[4] who pronounced them genuine Egyptian Characters, and that the Translation was correct and he gave me a Certificate to that Effect. afterwards when I told him whome the man Joseph Smith got the Plates from, and who delivered the Gold Plates to him, he demanded the Certificate back again <and destroyed it>, Saying, There is no such thing as ministering of Angels in these days, but if I would bring him the Gold Plates, he would Translate them. I told him that a considerable portion of the Plates were sealed and could not be opened to human gaze.

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3. Original document is written in blue ink, apparently in Pilkington's hand.

4. On Charles Anthon (1797-1867), see introduction to V.D.2, CHARLES ANTHON TO E. D. HOWE, 17 FEB 1834.

He then Exclaimed "I Can not Read a Sealed Book."

And thus the Prophe<c>y of Isaiah were fullfilled, which will be found in the 29 Chapter and 11 verse, but I did not know that I was fullfilling it at the time. I was then convinced that it was true, and I offered my services as a scribe for the Prophet in the work of Translating. Joseph gladly accepted my Offer, it was the 12th day of April 1828, when I commenced to write for the Prophet from this time on until the 14th day of June 1828[5] Joseph dictated to me from the Plates of Gold as the characters thereon assumed through the Urim and Thummim the forms of Equivelent modern words, which were familiar to the understanding of the Prophet and Seer, [p. 2] from the 12th day of April until the 14th day of June he said he had written One Hundred and Sixteen pages Foolscap of the translation he said at this period of the Translation a circumstance happened that he was the cause of the One Hundred and Sixteen pages that he had written being lost, and never was found. he said he believed his Wife burned it up, as she was very bitter against him having any thing to do with Joseph Smith.[6]

It was caused through her insisting that he bring the manuscript home and letting her and the rest of the family handle and see it. His family then consisted of his first Wife [Lucy Harris], his Father [Nathan Harris] and mother [Rhoda L. Harris], his Brother Preserved Harris, and his Wifes Sister a Mrs [Polly Harris] Cobb.[7] I promised Joseph that I would not let anyone else see it. Joseph Enquired of the Lord through the Urim and Thummim if Harris should be permitted to take them, and was forbidden Twice, but the Third time he was permitted to take them after promissing Joseph that he would not let any more see it but he said when he arrived home, there were more people in the House besides the Five, and his Wife took the manuscript and he never saw it any more.

So you see Willie, it was stolen from me, and I could not take it back, but he said, the Lords work cannot be stopped by mortal man, and Joseph was told in a Revelation to retranslate from the Small Plates of Nephi [D&C 10], and thereby thawart [thwart] the plans of wicked men, but I was never permitted to write for the Prophet anymore. Oliver Cowdery did all the rest of the writing, he said when the Saints moved to Missouri he stayed in Kirtland, he was the Custodian of the Kirtland Temple. ... [p. 3] ...

I asked him, Is it not true that you were active in the performance of

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5. See I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 9.

6. See introduction to III.L.16, BOOK OF MORMON PREFACE, 1829.

7. See I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 9.

your duties in the Early rise of the Church, and that you give your money liberally to help the Prophet and the Church along?

That is all True, replied Harris!

Everything was all right then, I was honored while the Saints were in Kirtland, but now that I am old and Poor it is all diffrent. I mortgaged my Farm to pay for the first publication of 5000 copys of the Book of Mormon.[8] I asked him if he still believed that the Book of Mormon was True, and that Joseph Smith was indeed a true Prophet of God?

His whole being became Electrified and it seemed that a changed man stood before me.

It was no longer a man with an Imagined grievance. It was a man with a message, a man with Noble Convictions in his Heart, Inspired of God, and indowed with a Divine Knowledge. He said, Just as sure as you see the Sun shining, Just as sure am I that I stood in [p. 4] the presence of an Angel of God with Joseph Smith, and saw him hold the Gold Plates in his Hands. I also saw the Urim and Thummim, The Breastplate, and the Sword of Laban. I saw the Angel desend from Heaven, and when he had finished his message I saw him assend up into Heaven. The Heavens were then opened and I heard the voice of God declare, that every thing the Angel had told us was True, and that the Book of Mormon was Translated correct. I was commanded by Gods Voice to testify to the whole World what I had seen and heard.

I cried out in my Esticy, Tis Enough; Tis Enough; Mine Eyes have beheld of the glories of God.

Hosanna; Hosanna; Hosanna; To God and The Lamb and I fell on my face on the ground. The next thing I knew the Prophet was helping me up.

I said[,] Brother Harris, This is Electrictfying to me to have the priviledge of conversing with a man that has stood and talked with angels of the Lord, it is grand to hear you Bare your Testimoney.

I asked him, Did you, or Either one of the other Witnesses ever at any time deny your Testimoney as recorded in the Preface of the Book of Mormon?

He answered, No! No one of the Three Witnesses to the Authenticity of The Book of Mormon ever at any time deny his Testimoney.

They all Died reaffirming it with their last Breath; His voice throbbed with the sincerity and the conviction of his message. he was then the real Martin Harris whose burning Testimoney, no Power on Earth could Quench. he said again, he spent his money freely for the [p. 5] Church,

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8. See III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829.

I was the first scribe for Joseph in the Translating of the Book of Mormon.[9]
...

I had many Interviews with Martin Harris as I lived in the Harris family Eighteen Months, about Ten Months prior to his death. "While my name is not Harris." I became a member of the family through living with them so long.

I am the only one alive today of his immediate family that knows anything pertaining to his Testimoney, as taken from his own Lips. In his talks with me he would say, Now Willie, I am not going to live very long; and after I am dead I want you to tell the people what I have told you, for it is all True; and he would hold up his [p. 6] right hand and sware himself that he was telling the Truth. I would Invariably tell him;

Yes Grandpa I will sure tell the people what you have told me, for I know you have told me the truth!

on the 9th day of July 1875, while he was dying I knelt by his Cot, as he was lying on a Cot in the South West Corner of the room in a House owned by a man by the name of Carbine,[10] it was situated on the North Side of Clarkston, Cache County, Utah.

I wanted to get what I thought would be his last words, but he could not talk Audible, I could not understand what he wanted to tell me, he tried hard to tell me.

So I stroked his Hair back on his Forehead and Knelt down and prayed to the Lord and asked him in the name of Jesus to stregnthten [strengthen] his Servents voice so that I could understand his last words, but I could get no responce, he was lying on his left side, facing in the room, and as I knelt down I placed my Hands on his right arm; and as I moved to stand up I was in the act of moving my hands and he shook his Head, as if he did not want me to move. I then Knelt down again and prayed to the Lord as before, and I was Inspired by the Lord to ask Grandpa, if he wanted me to hold up his right Hand so that he could bare his Testimoney. I asked him and his answer came clear, Yes! While I held his right hand up strength was given to him and

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9. Contrary to this claim, Emma Smith apparently acted as Smith's scribe briefly before Harris (see I.F.1, EMMA SMITH BIDAMON INTERVIEW WITH EDMUND C. BRIGGS, 1856; and IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 4).

10. Perhaps William Van Orden Carbine (b. 1835) who moved to Clarkston, Cache County, Utah, in 1870. On 20 May 1877 he became counselor to Bishop Jardine of Clarkston. He moved to La Grande, Oregon, in 1902 (Jenson 1971, 3:41).

he bore his Testimoney, as he had done many times before, and I understood every word.

He then bore the same Testimoney to the whole World, and then layed back Exhausted. There were Two other men [p. 7] standing in the room and heard him bare his Testimoney One of them was Thomas Godfery of Clarkston who Just recently Died.[11]

Martin Harris's spirit departed the next day, the 10th Day of July 1875, in Clarkston Cache County, Utah, aged 92 years. I attended his Funeral and assisted in his burial in the Clarkston Cemetary.

Signed [s] William Pilkington
Smithfield, Utah.

[*The following affidavit accompanies Pilkington's statement*][12]

State of Utah
ss
County of Cache

On this 3 day of April 1934 before me, Jos[eph]. W. Peterson, a Notary Public in and for the State of Utah, County of Cache, personally appeared William Pilkington of Smithfield, Utah, known to me, who being first duly sworn on his oath deposed and said as follows:—

That the attached eight pages of manuscript written by William Pilkington and containing an account of the dying testimony of Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, which testimony was given by said Martin Harris to the writer on the 9 day of July 1875 at Clarkston <Utah> is a true and correct account of the said testimony and circumstances in relation thereto.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF he has hereunto subscribed his name this 3 day of April 1934.

[s] William Pilkington

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 3 day of ~~March~~ <April> 1934.

[s] Jos. W. Peterson
Notary Public, residing at
Smithfield, Utah

My commission expires Feb. 6, 1936

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11. See III.F.22, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH THOMAS GODFREY, MAY 1875.

12. The original is typed and signed.

[*4. Testimony, 19 May 1934*][13]

My dear Brethern and Sisters: I am sure pleased to be here on this auspicious occasion. I first became acquainted with Martin Harris in the fall of 1874, in the Early part of October when I was hired out to work and live in the Harris family for one year, they then lived in Smithfield, Cache County, Utah.

They moved across the Valley to Clarkston in the fall of 1874, on the 9th day of July 1875. While he was dying (as he died the 10th day of July 1875). I held up his right hand while he bore the following Testimony.

"I did go in the Woods with Joseph Smith[,] Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer and beheld an angel desend from Heaven in a dazzling light of glory, and stood about two feet from the ground, I saw the Gold Plates. I saw him turn the leaves over one by one, I saw the Urim and Thummim, the Breast Plate, and the Sword of Laban. After the angel had delivered his message. I saw him assend up into Heaven, and I heard the Voice of God declare that Everything that the angel had said was true, "out of the dazzling light," and that the Book of Mormon was translated correct. I was commanded by God's voice to testify, to all the World, what I had seen and heard. I cried out in my Estacy, "Tis Enough; Tis Enough; mine eyes have beheld the the glories of God, 'Hossanah to God and the Lamb,' Jumping up I praised the Lord."

Brethren and Sisters I thank you for your kind attention, and I do it in the name of Jesus Christ Amen!

This testimony is just as I read it at the Pilgrimage of the Aaronic Priesthood at the grave of Martin Harris in the Clarkston Cemetery on the 19th day of May 1834.

[s] William Pilkington,
Smithfield, Utah.

[*5. Autobiography, 1938*][14]

One dark night we had been in our new home a few days. A knock came on the door while we were all singing the songs of Zion; we stopped singing and Father opened the door. A strange man walked in. He was given a chair and he sat down. He said, "What is your name?" Father

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13. This is an undated copy of Pilkington's testimony read at Martin Harris's grave at the Clarkston Cemetery on 19 May 1934. It is written in blue ink, apparently in Pilkington's hand.

14. Taken from Gunnell 1955, 26-27, 71-73, 76-77, 84-85.

promptly told him our name was Pilkington. He said, "Are you immigrants?" He was told that we had just immigrated from England. He said he wanted to hire a boy to go and live with him for one year. My brother, Richard, and I were sitting together on the right of the stranger. He looked at us and said, "I think this one will do." That one was "Willie,"—me. He then asked if I would like to go and live with him for a year. He said he had just sold out his property in Smithfield, and was going to a place across the valley, called Clarkston. Father asked him how much that I would get if I went for a year. He thought a little while and then said. "I will give Willie a two-year old heffer and his board and clothes if he will work for me.["] I asked Father what he thought about the proposition. He said it was alright—I could go and work for him a year, and for me to be a good boy.

I put on my coat and hat, kissed Father, Mother, and all the rest of the family and went with him. It was a very dark night, and the country being strange to me, he took hold of my hand. We walked for about ten minutes, and entered a log house—the first log house I was ever in. The rest of the family had all retired to bed. Or at least I thought so. I thought it very strange the man that was strange did not tell me what his name was; he gave me a chair and sat me down close by a little round table. He then asked me if I had had my supper. I said, "yes," and he said, "maybe you can eat a little more." So he got a pan of milk, some bread, a bowl and a spoon, and told me the folks had all gone to bed, and "now I will go to bed, but before going I will show you where you will sleep on the floor," and then he went to bed. I was enjoying the bread and milk when my attention was attracted to an object over in the northwest corner of the room. As the little oil lamp gives a very little light, I was a little puzzled as to what it could be, so I ate a little faster so that I could go to bed, and I was obliged to go between the table and this object, and in going round the table I discovered the form of a man. He made a motion with his hand as if he wanted me. Rather timidly I went over to him. I still felt rather a crawly sensation creeping over me, but I pulled up the chair alongside the chair he was sitting in and sat down. He asked me what my name was, I promptly told him my name was William Pilkington. He asked me if we were immigrants. I told him our family immigrated from England. He then asked me if I was going to live with them. I told him I thought I would live with them for a year.

Up to this time neither one of them had told me what their name was, and it rather puzzled me. Then he asked me if I was a Mormon. I told him our whole family were Mormons. He told me he was going

to call me Willie. I told him that Mother called me Willie too. Then he said, "Willie, tomorrow night after your chores are done and we have had supper, and all the folks have gone to bed, I want you to sit down in this chair, close to mine, for I have lots to tell you.["] I told him I would do that, and then we retired to bed and the floor. ... I was wondering all day long what that old man wanted me for—an old decrepid man who wanted to talk to a boy, that he found out was a Mormon boy. At last night came, supper was over, and after having family prayer, they all retired to bed. The old gentleman sat down in his arm chair, put his elbow on the arm of the chair and crooked his finger as he did scores of times afterwards, and that was a signal for me to bring another chair alongside of his. ... He then said, "Willie, did you ever go to Sunday School?" I promptly told him, "Yes, sir." "What class were you in?" I promptly told him the book of Mormon class. His eyes sparkled and his whole body seemed to reviberate. He seemed like a changed being. He was very excited, trembling as I gazed in his eyes. He said, "Did you ever read the Book of Mormon?" "Yes, sir," was the reply. "Well, if you have read the Book of Mormon, what is the first reading in the preface of the book that [we] find?" After a little thinking, I said, "The first reading in the Book of Mormon is the testimony of the three men testifying to the whole world that they saw an angel come down from Heaven. That they saw the Gold plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated, and the angel told them that the translation was correct and we bear record that Joseph Smith is a true Prophet of God, and that there Names will forever go before the world testifying that the Book of Mormon is true.["] He then said, "I know, now, Willie, that you have read that glorious book. Willie, I am going to ask you one more question. What were those three men's names?" I told him they were Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris. This little, old man, then ninety-two [ninety-one] years of age, of whom in my mind I had likened to Rip Van Winkle, whose whole being at this time was wonderful to behold, all lit up with the Spirit of God, whose eyes now were sparkling, whose whole being transformed, stood up before me on the memorable occasion, and putting his walking cane in his left hand, straightened up and striking his breast with his right hand, exclaimed, "I am Martin Harris," one of the three witnesses to the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. A man who had the privilege of standing before angels, a man whose eyes beheld the golden plates, a man whose ears heard the voice of God from heaven declare that the Book was translated correct, and that com-

manded him to testify to all the world that it was correct. I say again, can you imagine me a mere boy not yet fourteen years of age until the next month, November, as this was October of the year 1874.

From that time on until his death, he never tired of telling me of the beauties of the Gospel, and especially about the early rise of the Church, and the trials and tribulations that beset the Prophet Joseph Smith and Himself. ...

The act was as follows: Martin's wife [Lucy] said that Joe Smith was deluded and crazy, and was opposed to her husband having anything to do with him. She was terrible bitter against Joseph Smith, and forbid her husband having anything to do with him, but knowing by this time that it was Joseph[,] Joe as she called him, if he would let him bring the manuscript home with him so that she could see it. (However, knowing of the manuscript, she told Martin to inquire of Joseph if he could bring it home and show it to her.) Martin loved his wife and wanted to satisfy her in relation to the matter. So accordingly he asked the Prophet if it would be possible for him to take the 116 pages of manuscript home with him to satisfy his wife, also his father and mother, his brother, Preserved Harris, and a Mrs. [Polly Harris] Cobb, his wife's sister. Possibly Joseph would like to satisfy Martin, so he asked the Lord through the Urim and Thummim; and [the] answer was no,—he was not to be permitted to take them away. When he arrived home, he related the answer to his wife. He told me she became very angry, and persuaded him to ask Joseph again, which he did, with the same result. She still persisted and wanted him to ask Joe the third time. At this time Martin said she was awful worked up and threatened to kick him out of the house if he did not bring the manuscript. He told me again, "Willie, I loved my wife and wanted to please her, so I told her I would ask the Prophet the third time. Joseph Smith took the Urim and Thummim and inquired of the Lord.[15] I found out, Willie, that the Lord could get out of patience as well as a human;" But this time Joseph was told that at his own peril he may let Martin take them. So Joseph asked him how many he desired to show it to. Martin said to five,—his wife, his father and mother, his brother, Preserved Harris, and a Mrs. Cobb, his wife's sister. So he was allowed to take them home with him. On arrive [arrival] home he found his wife had told other people beside their family. She took the manuscript from

15. Martin Harris was in Harmony and his wife in Palmyra at the time he took the manuscript, so he could not have consulted Lucy Harris each time he approached Smith about taking the manuscript, unless there was an exchange of letters.

him and she was perusing them when someone jerked them from her, and then another got it, and Martin told me it disappeared, and he never saw it any more.[16] ...

He told me he was active in the Church as long as the body of the Church remained in Ohio. He said when the Church moved to Missouri he remained behind; he said that the people said he had apostatized, but not so, nor was he ever officially excommunicated from the Church. He remained in Kirtland, Ohio, for over twenty-five years after the Prophet and his brother Hyrum were murdered. He remained separated from the Church, he was like a sheep without a shepherd, outside the flock, but he said he was never officially excommunicated from the Church but remained true and faithful to the testimony he had given, nor did he ever in his life deny it.

He told me many, many times that he did stand in the presence of the angel of the Lord, with Joseph Smith, and heard the voice of God from heaven declare that everything the angel told them was true and that the Book of Mormon was translated correctly. He said he was commanded by the voice of God to testify to all the world what he had seen and heard was correct, and in his talks with me he would say, he had asked me many times if I would tell the people what he had told me and he repeated, "Now, Willie, you won't forget to tell the people what I have told you, will you, after I am dead and gone?" And he would hold up his hand to the square and say that he was telling the truth. And I would tell him, "No, Grandpa, I won't; I will sure tell the people what you have told me, for I know that you have told me the truth."

I attended his funeral and helped to fill in his grave. I was between fourteen and fifteen years of age when he died. I lived in the Harris family one year and a half. At this writing I am 77 years of age. I have lectured in 37 wards in the Church on the life of Martin Harris, also Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer, the other two witnesses. I have lectured from Cache County on the north to Carbon County on the south. In lecturing, hundreds of people have told me that the Lord has permitted me to live to an advanced age to fulfill the promise that I made to Martin Harris. My life has been miraculously preserved on five or six different occasions, when it seemed that death was nigh, and of course I have thanked and praised the Lord, that he spared my life to this wonderful and truthful story. ...

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16. See introduction to III.L.16, BOOK OF MORMON PREFACE, 1829.

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARTIN HARRIS

In October of the fall of seventy-four,
I met an aged man who I had never seen before
His steps were feeble, but his eyes were bright
And in them gleamed, intelligence and light.

He was a living witness with eleven
of Ministrations from the courts of Heaven,
Nine of those witnesses have passed away.
And he had then, little time to stay.

. . . .

"Pray, is it true," I asked that you have been
With heavenly messengers and have seen,
The records called the plates of brass and gold,
Of which Moroni, in his Book has told?

"Tis said you saw an angel from on high,
While other witnesses were standing by,
And that the messengers commanded you,
To testify that this strange work is true.

Not questioning your statement that I've read,
Or what the other witness' have said,
But I would like to know from you direct,
If we have read or heard those things correct?

He lifted up his voice and thus replied
My written statement I have ne'er denied,
I saw the angel, and I heard his voice,
And wondrous things that made my heart rejoice.

This interview was sought with earnest prayer,
The Prophet, and three witnesses were there.
But Martin, conscious-stricken, declined to stay.
And wandered off alone to watch and pray.

I do not know the angel's rank or name,
Who on this great and glorious mission came,
I know that he was clothed in power and might
And was surrounded with effulgent light.

No tongue can tell the glory and the power

That was revealed to us in that blessed hour,
The plates of brass and gold the angel took
and placed before us like an open book.

What Martin Harris said, the people know
May be regarded as precisely so.
He's not a man to shade the truth, or lie.
For on his word you can, for sure, rely.

. . . .

By William Pilkington
Smithfield, Utah

[*6. Address, 23 April 1939*][17]

After sixty-three long years, I am still bearing my testimony, which I promised that illustrious man [Martin Harris] ... that I would do, with my right arm up to the square. With my right arm up to the square, also, that he was telling the truth, and had told me the truth. It has been over sixty-three years since that happened, when I was between fourteen and fifteen years of age. ...

"I was born November 13, 1860, in England. My family emigrated from England the fall of [18]74. ... I was fourteen years of age when I went to live with the Harris family in Smithfield."

... I was hired out for a year to work for the Harris family. I had been there ten months when Grandfather [Martin Harris] died.

Now, then, Martin Harris became acquainted with Joseph Smith in 1827. One day I was walking along the street at Palmyra, New York. I had heard about the Prophet Joseph, had heard about his Vision, and finally, I had heard about the gold plates being delivered to his hand by an Angel of the Lord. I met two young men walking together, with whom I entered into conversation. Joseph Smith made me acquainted with his new brother-in-law [Alvah Hale]. Joseph Smith had just received the plates from the Angel Moroni, 'but promised them that I would begin translating, but I can not do it, because wicked men haunt me, day and night. And I can not begin the translation, [p. 1] and it hurts. Mr. Harris, I am a poor boy; my parents and family are poor, but we are honest. I have a letter in my possession, recently received from my father-in-law [Isaac Hale], stating that if I will come to his house, with my wife, Emma, he will let me have a room where I will be

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17. The original is a typed document.

secluded—but I am poor, and have not the money to go there with.' Then it was that Martin Harris put his hand in his pocket. He said, 'Take that'. 'No, No. I am not giving it to you, I am giving it to the Lord, for His Servant to do his bidding.' That was the first money that Martin Harris gave to Joseph Smith, but it was not the last, by any means. Joseph, as soon as he could get ready, took his young wife and went to the home of her parents, away to Harmony, Pennsylvania; and there, through the help of his wife, Emma, and what faith he could muster up, he tried to translate and failed. And he found he had put all his trust in the Lord. It was to be through the Power of God—not through the power of man—through the Power of God. They did some little translating, his wife Emma as Scribe; and the following February, in the winter time, when the snow was deep on the ground, Martin Harris wanted to know more about the Boy Prophet, and he walked all the way through the snow from Palmyra to Harmony. And he found out what he had done. He had quite a long talk with the Prophet, and he finally asked if he would be kind enough to join him in his work, and asked the Prophet if he would let him take what he had written to some learned men, to some linguist. The Prophet finally gave his consent. Martin Harris took them to the Columbia College in the State of New York, to Charles Antony, Professor of Languages, and he asked him pertaining to the sheet, let him see it, of course, and he examined them, and asked Martin what he wanted of him. Martin asked him what they were, and the Professor said they were ancient Egyptian, Chaldaec, and Assyrian. Grandfather [Martin Harris] quotes him as saying that the Copy of Characters were perfect, more perfect than any he had ever seen. What about the translation? The translation was likewise more perfect than any he had ever seen. He questioned Grandfather [Harris] carefully. What did he do? The Professor took out his notebook and wrote an affidavit to the effect that it was Ancient Assyriac, more perfect than any he had ever written, and gave it to Grandfather Harris, who just doubled it up and put it in his vest pocket. "Where did you get those characters?"

"I got them from an Angel of the Lord."

"Why, man, that would be revelation. Revelation was done away with in the days of the Savior. It's all from the Devil. You can go back to that Smith man, and tell him that I will translate them for him."

And then it was that Grandfather [Harris] told him it was no use, and human gaze was not to be permitted to rest on them. Then it was that the Chapter in Isaiah was fulfilled. It was fulfilled to the letter, and Grandfather did not know he was fulfilling it.

And he winds up by saying, "I can not read a sealed book." Mr. Harris, would you let me have that certificate? Did he change it? Did he alter it?

Yes, he did. He took it up and ripped it in two. "Go and bring those plates to me, and out of my knowledge, I will translate them." ... [p. 2] ...

About the middle of October, [18]74, his family moved across to Clarkston in Cache Valley. Throughout the winter, Grandfather never tired of telling me of the beauties of the Gospel. About the fore part of July, 1875, Grandfather was taken seriously ill. He had a stroke. Before that for two months, he got so he could scarcely talk to any one, except little Willie. He would talk with Willie as much as he could. The Harrises had a farm two miles north of Clarkston. The people had all gone away somewhere. They had a lone house on this farm, that stood on a little eminence or rise. I was standing in the doorway, and I happened to raise my eyes towards Clarkston, and saw some dust, until mechanically letting my eyes follow the dust up the Cemetery, and over the Point, up to the door.

"Is your name Willie?" There is an old man in Clarkston, and he wants you quickly."

I knew who it was. I ran and jumped on a horse. The house is situated on the north side of Clarkston, five or six feet from the western fence line. I ran up the walk and pushed the door open. The scene I saw was, to me like this: There were two men standing in the middle of the room; at that particular time, I didn't know who they were. ... Grandfather was lying on a cot in that particular corner of the room; the cot was about eighteen inches high from the floor, and he was lying on his left side, and that brought his right arm up first in the room. "Grandfather, did you want Willie?" He could not talk. Speech was gone. And his breath was growing short. I did want that man's last words, because I told him with my hand up to the square that I would tell the people after he was gone, but I could get no response. I leaned over him. The perspiration stood out in beads on his forehead. He commenced to cry. I said, "Grandfather, don't cry." Willie joined in and cried too. ...

... And I will never forget it if I live to be twice as old as I am now, and I knelt down again and I said, "Please, Lord, won't you strengthen your servant's voice; so I can get his last words; I told him I would tell them." Boylike, of course, but I was so enthused over wanting those words. I knew he was dying. The Spirit of the Lord came to me that quickly, "He wants you to hold up his right arm when he bears his testimony.["] These two hands held up that man's right arm in that condition, and the Lord came to my aid, and strengthened his voice. ... [p. 4] ...

When I held up his right arm, he commenced, "Yes, I did go into the woods with Joseph Smith and David Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery. These eyes beheld the Heavens open and an Angel come down, and an Angel of

the Lord descended in a dazzling light of glory. We were right in the Glory and Spirit of that Heavenly Being. He stood about two feet from the ground, and His gold plates in His hand and with the Sword of Laban. The first time the sword of Laban had been seen was on that particular occasion. He told us what the Lord was going to do. It is enough. It is enough. Mine eyes have beheld the Glories of God. Hosannah, Hosannah, to God and the Lamb."

Jumping up, I praised the Lord. I thought that was the last of Grandfather. But it was not. The end came the next day, the tenth day of July, 1875, at Clarkston, Cache County, Utah. ...

22.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH THOMAS GODFREY, MAY 1875

Thomas Godfrey, Affidavit, 2 July 1933, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah. Published in *Deseret News* (church section), 15 July 1933, 3.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Thomas Godfrey (1846-1933/34) was born in England. He immigrated with his parents, John and Mary (Pittaway) Godfrey, to Utah about 1866, settling in Clarkston, Cache County, Utah. In April 1867, Godfrey married Maria Jensen, daughter of Ole A. Jensen (see III.F.24, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH OLE A. JENSEN, JUL 1875). In June 1889, Godfrey was imprisoned for four months and fined $100 for unlawful cohabitation. He died shortly after the present statement was taken, either in 1933 or 1934 (Jenson 1899, 175; *Genealogical Surveys of L.D.S. Members,* 1924-29, 10:351; William Pilkington, in his 3 April 1934 affidavit, mentions Thomas Godfrey's recent death).

The occasion of Thomas Godfrey's affidavit, as also that of his younger brother John (see III.F.23, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOHN E. GODFREY, MAY 1875), was the pilgrimage of the Aaronic priesthood to the grave of Martin Harris on 2 July 1933 (see *Deseret News* [church section], 15 July 1933, 3).[1] While Thomas Godfrey could not remember the exact time of his interview with Martin Harris, John dated it to May 1875. A third affidavit by John Buttars was produced at the same time in support of John Godfrey's account. Buttars testified as follows:

> Thomas Godfrey, William Sparks and myself went to visit Martin Harris in the winter or spring of 1875, as I remember. At that time Thomas Godfrey asked Martin Harris if he believed the Book of Mormon to be true, and he said, "No, I don't believe it to be true, I know it is true." Then He stated the conversation as Thomas Godfrey has given it in his affidavit which has just been read to me,

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1. In an affidavit, dated 29 October 1921, George Godfrey mentioned his brothers Thomas and John as possible affiants to support his statement regarding the testimony of Martin Harris (see George Godfrey, Affidavit, 29 October 1921, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah; see also "Martin Harris Addendum" for George Godfrey's statement).

and the statement as Thomas Godfrey has given it, is true to the best of my knowledge (original in LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah; cf. Gunnell 1955, 115; published in *Deseret News* [church section], 15 July 1933, 3).

Godfrey's original affidavit, given below, is typed and signed.

STATE OF UTAH | ss.
County of Cache |

Thomas Godfrey, being duly sworn deposes and says, that he is 86 years old and of sound mind and memory, and that he is a resident of Clarkston, Cache County, Utah, and has been since 1866. That he met Martin Harris early in the year of 1875. That he saw him on a number of occasions and on one occasion in particular he visited him in company with a number of others, and asked him whether or not he believed the BOOK OF MORMON to be true, and he answered:

"No, I don't believe anything about it. Knowledge supercedes belief. I know it is true. I saw the angel and saw the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated and heard the voice of God declare it was translated correctly." He said this so that all present could hear.

On another occasion I heard him talk about his visit to Professor Charles Anthon,[2] and this is his story: "I drove a team from Western New York to New York City and presented the characters to him, taken from the plates of the Book of Mormon, and the Professor made the statement that they were the best characters of Egyptian, and the translation accompanying it was also the best he had ever seen,[3] and he gave me a statement to that effect. Then he asked me where the original was and I told him that an angel gave them to a young man in Western New York state. He then asked for the statement. Thinking he was going to add something to it, I handed it to him, and the Professor tore it up, saying that there were no angels and to bring the plates to him and he would translate them. I told him I could not bring them because part of them were sealed, and he said, 'No one can read a sealed book.' I then went to Professor Mitchell,[4] and this learned man also

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2. On Charles Anthon (1797-1867), see introduction to V.D.2, CHARLES ANTHON TO E. D. HOWE, 17 FEB 1834.

3. Regarding Harris's meeting with Charles Anthon, see discussion in "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

4. On Samuel L. Mitchell (1764-1831), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 45.

cor[r]oborated the statement that had previously been made by Professor Anthon.["] Martin Harris said he then went home satisfied that it was the truth.

[s] Thomas Godfrey

Swore to and subscribed before me this 2nd day of July, 1933

[s] Jesse P. Rich
Jesse P. Rich, City Judge
Logan, Utah

23.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOHN E. GODFREY, MAY 1875

John E. Godfrey, Affidavit, 2 June [July] 1933, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah. Published in *Deseret News* (church section), 15 July 1933, 3.

EDITORIAL NOTE

John E. Godfrey (1854-?) was born in England. He immigrated to Utah with his parents, John and Mary (Pittaway) Godfrey, about 1866, and settled in Clarkston, Cache County, Utah, where he probably lived until his death. Godfrey, age twenty-six, is listed in the 1880 census of Clarkston as a farmer (1880:226). Regarding the occasion of Godfrey's making his affidavit, which is typed and signed, see introduction to III.F.22, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH THOMAS GODFREY, MAY 1875.

STATE OF UTAH | ss.
County of Cache |

John E. Godfrey, being duly sworn deposes and says that in the spring of 1875 in the month of May, one beautiful spring morning as I walked down in the town, I met William Sparks[1] and Samuel Stewart,[2] and we passed the morning with one another and I asked, "Where are you going, brethren," and they said, "We are going to hear Martin Harris bear his testimony. Come and go with us." I accepted of this invitation and we went down to where Martin Harris lived. He was then living in a log house with a dirt roof and as we knocked on the door, his daughter-in-law[3] answered it and we told her what our errand was, and she said, "Come in, brethren,["] and we walked in and she said to Martin Harris, "Grandpa, some of the brethren have come to hear you bear your testimony,["] and Martin Harris said, "All right,

1. William Sparks, age thirty-three, is listed in 1880 census of Clarkston, Cache County, Utah (1880:224).

2. Samuel Stewart, a native of Scotland, is listed in the 1870 census of Clarkston, Cache County, Utah, as a twenty-seven-year-old farmer.

3. Nancy Ann Homer Harris, wife of Martin Harris, Jr.

brethren, I am pleased to have you come." He was seated in one corner of the house, and was very feeble. As he straightened himself up, he shook hands with us and said, "Come and sit close to me so that I can see you." One of the brethren said, "Brother Harris, we have come to hear you bear your testimony in regard to the Book of Mormon.["] He said, "I am pleased to have you come, and I wish I could bear my testimony to the whole world.

"The Prophet, Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdrey,[4] and David Whitmore[5] and myself went into the woods to pray that we might have the privilege of seeing the golden plates. We bowed our heads in prayer, but we seemed to be praying with no results. The prophet was the spokesman. He prayed with no results twice, then I withdrew from them, telling them that it was on my account that their prayer was not answered. After they had been visited by the angel the Prophet then came over to me where I was praying, and I asked the prophet to pray with me so that I might have the privilege also of seeing the golden plates, and after praying sometime the angel appeared with the golden plates and I saw with these two eyes the angel stand with the gold plates in his hands, and I saw him turn leaf by leaf the plates of gold, and I also heard the voice of the Lord saying that these words were true and translated correctly."

One of the brethren who visited Martin Harris asked him as my brother, Thomas Godfrey, did if he believed the Book of Mormon to be true, and he said, "No, I KNOW it is true."

I was standing back of one of the other brethren, and while Martin Harris was bearing his testimony, I have never had such a feeling go over me from my head to my feet. I had never had such a feeling in my life, and I knew that Martin Harris was bearing a faithful testimony.

I am 79 years of age, I came to Clarkston in 1865, and have lived here ever since. I was 21 years of age when I heard Martin Harris bear his testimony.

[s] John E. Godfrey

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 2nd day of June [July], 1933, A.D.[6]

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4. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

5. On David Whitmer (1805-88), see "Introduction to David Whitmer Collection."

6. Godfrey's affidavit is evidently misdated since it was probably taken at the same time Thomas Godfrey and John Buttars made their statements,

[s] Jesse P. Rich
Jesse P. Rich, City Judge,
Logan, Utah

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on 2 July 1933 (see III.F.22, THOMAS GODFREY AFFIDAVIT, 2 JUL 1933). In a letter to John D. Giles, dated 6 July 1933, Judge Jesse P. Rich states that the affidavits were all taken on the same day: "Enclosed please find affidavits taken last Sunday at Clarkston, Utah. After they were corrected and sworn to by the witnesses they were rewritten and signed before we left Clarkston" (Gunnell 1955, 112).

24.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH OLE A. JENSEN, JULY 1875

Ole A. Jensen, "Testimony of Martin Harris (One of the Witnesses of the Book of Mormon)," undated (c. 1918), original in private possession (photocopies at Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah; LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah; and Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Provo, Utah). Published in *Star Valley Independent* (Fairview, Wyoming), 13 December 1918. A portion was also published in the *Improvement Era* 26 (September 1923): 900-901.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Ole Anderson Jensen moved to Clarkston, Cache County, Utah, about 1864, where in 1877 he became a counselor to Bishop John Jardine (Jenson 1971, 3:424-25; and III.F.25, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH ALMA L. JENSEN AND OTHERS, 4 JUL 1875). He married Annie Marie Larsen. Shortly before Martin Harris's death, on 10 July 1875, Jensen and two boyhood friends, John Godfrey and James Keep, visited the aged witness to question him about his testimony of the Book of Mormon. Jensen subsequently moved to Fairview, Wyoming, where he was evidently living when the *Star Valley Independent* published the account of his interview with Harris in 1918. The details of his death are presently unknown.

There are many copies of Jensen's statement regarding Harris's testimony of the Book of Mormon. The present document is apparently an original in Jensen's hand, but this cannot be stated with absolute certainty. A copy of Jensen's statement containing some slight variations was at one time in the possession of Comfort Elizabeth Godfrey Flinders, daughter of Richard and Jane Godfrey, which she included in her Pioneer Personal History, dated 8 May 1939 (Federal Writers Project, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah). The LDS Church Archives possesses the undated copies of George Godfrey (brother of John Godfrey) and A. J. Godfrey (son of John Godfrey), both very similar in wording to the Flinders copy. Jensen's statement was "[c]opied by Lettie D. Campbell, at Fairview, Wyoming, December 4, 1918" for publication in the *Star Valley Independent,* which appeared on 13 December 1918. This printed version varies slightly in wording from both the Flinders copy and the present document. The

excerpt published in the *Improvement Era* in 1923 was apparently taken from the *Independent*.

Testimony of Martin Harris (One of the Witnesses of the Book of Mormon)

It was in Clarkston[,] Cashe Co[,] Utah [in] July in the year 1875.

Early in the morning a thought came to me that I would go and see how brother Harris was.

He was staying at his sons and was only three blocks from my home. I had heard he was not feeling well.

People came from other towns during the day to see how brother Harris was and to hear his testimony on the Book of Mormon. When I arrived there were already two men present.[1] [p. 1]

Brother Harris lay on his bed leaning on his elbow. I said "How are you Brother Harris this morning." He ~~a~~ answered slowly "pretty well"

["]We came to hear your testimony on the book of Mormon" I said[.] "Yes." he said in a loud voice as he sat up straight in bed. "I wish I could speak loud enough that the whole world could hear my testimony." Brother stand over hear so I can see you." He then stre[t]ched out his hand and said; ["]Brother I believe there is an angel here to hear what I ~~tell~~ shall tell you and you shall never forget what I say." The Prophet Joseph Smith, and Oliver Cowdery[2] and David Whitmer[3] and myself, [p. 2] went into a little grove to pray to obtain a promise that we should behold it with our ~~eyes~~ natural eyes [cf. LDS D&C 17:3], that we could testify of it to the world. We prayed two or three times and at length an angle [angel] stood before ~~us~~ Oliver [and David] and showed them the plates, but I had gone off by myself for I knew it was me that was keeping the angle [angel] from appear=ing. In my desperation I asked the Prophet Seer to kneel down with me and to pray for me also that I may also <see> the plates, and we did kneel down and pray Imediately the angle [angel] stood before ~~us~~ me and said: "Look["] and when I ~~looked~~ glanced [p. 3] at the angel, I fell but I stood on my feet and seen the angel turn the leaves of gold and I said "It is enough my Lord and my

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1. The earliest copies of Jensen's statement—the present document and Lettie D. Campbell's copy—fail to identify these two men. But at the end of the later copies of Comfort Flinders, George Godfrey, and A. J. Godfrey, the two other brethren are identified as John Godfrey and James Keep.

2. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

3. On David Whitmer (1805-88), see "Introduction to David Whitmer Collection."

God.["] I then heard the voice of God say "The book is true and is transalated correctly."

Brother Harris then turned himself as though he had no more to say and we made ready to go. He then spoke again and said. "I will tell you ~~th~~ a wonderful thing that happened after Joseph had found the plates: three of us took a notion to take some ~~of~~ tools and go to the hill and hunt for some more boxes or gold or something, and Indeed we found a stone box; we got quiet excited [p. 4] about it; and dug quiet [quite] carefully around it; we were ready to take it up: but behold <by> some unseen power it slipped ~~and~~ back into the hill; we stood there and looked at it; One of us took a crowbar and tried to ~~hold~~ <drive> it through the lid to hold it; but it glanced and only broke one corner off of the box.[4]

Some time that box will be found and you will see the corner broken off; then you will know I have told you the truth.["]

"Again Brothern as sure as you are standing here and see me: just that sure did I see the angel with the golden plates in his hand [p. 5] for he turned the golden leaves and showed them to me.

I have promised that I would bear ~~record~~ witness both here and here after.["]

His lips trembled and his eyes filled with tears; tears also came to my eyes[.] I should of liked to ask another question but I failed to do so: I then shook his hand and ~~left~~ thanked him and left.

When I think of the day when I stood before Martin Harris and saw him stretch forth his hand and raise his voice to bear his wonderful testimony.

The feeling that thrilled my whole soul I can never forget nor can I express the joy that filled me through and through.

This is a true statement

[s] Ole A. Jensen

4. See III.K.30, BRIGHAM YOUNG ACCOUNT, 1877.

25.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH ALMA L. JENSEN, 4 JULY 1875

Alma L. Jensen, Statement, 1 June 1936, Dayton, Idaho, typescript, Archives, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Alma Larsen Jensen (1864-?), son of Ole A. and Annie Marie (Larsen) Jensen, was born at Mendon, Cache County, Utah. On his eleventh birthday, 4 July 1875, he and two other boys visited Martin Harris and heard his testimony of the Book of Mormon. In July 1909, Jensen began to serve as bishop of the Dayton Ward in Franklin County, Idaho (Jensen 1971, 3:425). For Jensen's father's statement about his interview with Harris, see III.F.24, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH OLE A. JENSEN, JUL 1875.

In the summer of 1875, my father, Ole A. Jensen, then a counselor to Bishop Jardine[1] of Clarkston, Utah, told me that a man by the name of Martin Harris was living in Clarkston, Utah, and that the said Martin Harris was one of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon, and that he had seen and heard an angel from God testify to the truth of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Being of an inquisitive nature, I determined to learn for myself as to what the testimony of Martin Harris would be. I asked two of my chums, James Baker[2] and Isaac Stokes[3] to go with me to see Martin Harris. We called on him July 4, 1875, this being on my 11th birthday. Thomas Godfrey[4] introduced us to Mr. Harris who was living at the home of William Carbine.[5]

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1. John Jardine (1830-1903) did not become bishop of the Clarkston Ward until May 1877 (Jenson 1971, 3:424-25).

2. Probably James S. Baker, age twenty-four, listed in the 1880 census of Richmond, Cache County, Utah, as a farmer (1880:244).

3. Perhaps Isaac Hale Stokes, son of Henry Stokes, born in Mendon, Cache County, Utah, in 1864 (Black 1987, s.v., "Henry Stokes").

4. On Thomas Godfrey (1846-1933/34), see introduction to III.F.22, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH THOMAS GODFREY, MAY 1875.

5. Probably William V. Carbine, age forty-four, listed in the 1880 census of Clarkston, Cache County, Utah, as a farmer from New York

In introducing us, Mr. Godfrey said, "Brother Harris, I have brought these young men to hear your statement as to whether or not you believe the Book of Mormon to be true." His face was turned to the wall. He turned and faced us and said, "Now I don't believe, but I know it to be true, for with these eyes I saw the angel and with these ears (pointing to them) I heard him say it was a true and correct record of an ancient people that dwelt upon this the American continent, and I hereby testify to you young men that it is true."

I had such a feeling come over me that I shall never forget. I was convinced he spoke the truth.

This statement is made by me of my own free will and choice this 1st day of June, 1936.

(1880:223). This was evidently the same William Van Ordin Carbine born in 1835 at Cairo, Greene County, New York (*Genealogical Surveys of L.D.S. Members,* 1924-29, 5:118-19).

26.
MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH SIMON SMITH, 5 JULY 1875

1. Simon Smith to Joseph Smith III, 29 December 1880, Miscellaneous Letters and Papers, RLDS Church Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri. Published in *Saints' Herald* 28 (1 February 1881): 43.

2. Simon Smith to Mark H. Forscutt, 11 February 1881, Miscellaneous Letters and Papers, RLDS Church Library-Archives, Independence, Missouri.

3. "Latter Day Saints. An Interview with Elder Simon Smith to the Authenticity of the Book of Mormons. What Martin Harriss [*sic*], one of the Witnesses to the Book, Said on His Death-bed," *St. Joseph* (Missouri) *Herald* (16 April 1884): 2.

4. Simon Smith to Editor, 30 April 1884, *Saints' Herald* 31 (24 May 1884): 324.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Simon Long Smith (1833-98) was born in England. After his conversion to Mormonism, he immigrated to Utah in 1858, serving as bishop of the Clarkston Ward from 1870 to 1876. Sometime after 1876, he joined the RLDS church. He died at St. Joseph, Missouri (Jenson 1971, 4:415).

As bishop of the Clarkston Ward, Simon Smith visited Martin Harris five days before his death. In each of the following documents, Smith recalls the substance of his interview with the dying Book of Mormon witness.

[*1. Letter, 29 December 1880*][1]

Clifton, Bristol. England. Dec. 29th 1880

President Joseph Smith,[2] your favor, and Elder Mark H. Forscutt's[3] (23rd

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1. The letter is written in ink with editorial marks in purple ink.

2. On Joseph Smith III (1832-1914), see introduction to I.F.3, EMMA SMITH BIDAMON INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPH SMITH III, FEB 1879.

3. On Mark Hill Forscutt (1834-1903), see introduction to VI.B.4, JOHN WHITMER TO MARK H. FORSCUTT, 5 MAR 1876.

Oct. last[ )] is received. It laid through some time in the P.O. here as I was away visiting some of my relatives and old friends in Wilts. ...

... I have often thought of writing a few lines to you (since my Conversion to the doctrine of Christ for which your Father spent his days and life to establish) respecting an interview [p. 1] I had with Martin Harris Sen. a few days before his decease. On the 5th day of July 1875—hearing of his ~~late Martin Harris sen.~~ sickness, I visited him <and> as I intered the room where he was in bed he held out his hand and shook hands with me saying[,] ["]I am going to leave you now[,] Bishop,["] (meaning he was going to die) at the time he was very low and apparently it was hard work for him to talk[,] but was perfectly rat=ional[.] I laid my hand on his head and asked the Lord to give him strength as soon as I commenced to talk to him and ask him questions respecting the Book of Mormon and your Father he revived and talked to me very freely and with much earnestness <for about to [two] hours.> I will here give you the answers he gave me to a few promin=e[n]t questions respecting his knowledge of your father[,] the plates &c. 1st I asked him if he could still testify of seeing the plates and the angel of god[.] his answer was he could. And he did truly testify to me that he both saw and handled the plates[4] that the Book of Mormon was translated from and that an angel of god did lay them before him and the other two witness's as recorded in the Book of Mormon, and said he, ["]I tell you of other things that you might tell others that what I have said is true, and I dare not deny it,["] for what he had seen <heard> and had handled, he had heard the voice of god commanding him to testify to the same. He said also he knew not the reason why the Lord [p. 2] had suffered him to live to such a great age unless it was to testify of these things (he was nearly 93 years old)[.] He said also that he had acted as scribe for your father when he was translating from the plates by the Urim and Thummim nearly one third of what is published[5] and

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4. The impression that Harris handled the plates uncovered is false (see discussion in "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection").

5. This statement is undoubtedly incorrect. William Pilkington remembered Harris saying that after the loss of the manuscript, he "was never permitted to write for the Prophet any more" (III.F.21, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH WILLIAM PILKINGTON, 1874-1875). Edward Stevenson, however, recalled Harris saying that "there were not many pages translated while he wrote; after which Oliver Cowdery and others did the writing" (III.F.13, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH EDWARD STEVENSON, 1870). If Harris acted as scribe for any of the published translation, it was certainly very little. Harris may have acted as scribe briefly during a visit to Harmony, Pennsylvania, in March 1829, at which time Smith

Mort[g]aged his property,[6] to get the ~~money~~ first Edition of the Book of Mormon published to the world and that he by command, took part of the manuscript with the translation to one Mr. Anthony[7] Prof[essor]. of language's New York City to get his opinions in regard to the language and translation and <that> what had been published conce=rning the same was also true. and in regard to a question I asked him of your fathers education at the time of those circumstances, he said, ["]Joseph Smith's education was so limited that he could not draw up a note of hand[."][8] These were Martin Harris's exact words to me. ...

Your Bro. in the Cause of truth
Simon Smith

[*2. Letter, 11 February 1881*][9]

The Last Testimony of Martain Harris Sen.

Elder Mark H. Forscutt. 619 West Lake St. Chicago, Ill. U.S. America.

This is to certify, to all unto whom this shall come, that on the fifth day July A.D. 1875 I called on Martin Harris Sen. Then living at Clarkston[,] Cache Co.[,] Utah Ter[ritory]. as I entered the room where he was in bed, he stretched forth his hand to me and said. I am going to leave you now, (meaning he was going to die) in reply I told him I had come to talk ~~to~~ <with> him about the Book of Mormon. ...[10] he received strength (for he was very low at the time) and talked to me with much earnestness for about two hours. The following are some of the questions I asked him. viz. If he could still testify of seeing the Angle [angel] of god, and the plates, the Book of Mormon was translated from. His answer was he could, and he did truly testify to me that he saw the angle [angel] of god, and did hear his voice, and did see the plates

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dictated a revelation instructing him "when thou hast translated a few more pages thou shalt stop for a season" (D&C 5:30). Unfortunately, Harris's possible scribal work in the early portion of the book of Mosiah cannot be verified since pages from this section of the original manuscript have apparently not survived (see Jessee 1970, 273).

6. See III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829.

7. On Charles Anthon (1797-1867), see introduction to V.D.2, CHARLES ANTHON TO E. D. HOWE, 17 FEB 1834.

8. Compare with a similar statement by Emma Smith in I.F.3, EMMA SMITH BIDAMON INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPH SMITH III, FEB 1879.

9. The original letter is written in purple ink.

10. Ellipses in original.

that the Book of Mormon was translated from, and did hear the voice of God from heaven commanding him, and others as recorded in the Book of Mormon, to bear record of what they had seen and heard, he also said he could not deny these things lest the power of god should consume him, for he knew he was not deceived in the matter. he further said, he told of these things that it might be told to others, he also said that he wrote about one third of the Book of Mormon as it was translated from the plates by Joseph Smith Jun. by the means of the Urim and Thummim.[11] And that he took some of the characters of the plates, with the translation thereof <to> Mr. Anthon. Prof[essor]. of languages, New York City. And he received from the Prof[essor]. a certificate to the effect that the translation of the said characters were correct, but as he was leaving, the Prof[essor]. called him bact [back], and said he wanted to look at the note again and thinking he wanted to make some addition or correction to the certificate, he gave it back, and then the Prof[essor]. asked him more questions about the plates, and how they were obtained, and that he would like to see them, but he told the Prof[essor]. that they were forbidden to be shown to the world and that a part of them were sealed and the Prof[essor]. replyed he could not read a sealed Book, and refused to return him the certificate. He also said that Joseph Smith Jun's. means of support, and ed=ucation at the time of the translation of the plates was very limited. That he did not know how to draw up a note of hand properly, and knowing it was the will of got [God] to assist him he did so willingly. And for the first edition of the Book of Mormon that was published, he gave a Mortgage on his property to pay for the same. And that he did not know why the Lord had permitted him to live to such great age unless it was to testify of the truth of the Book of Mormon, which was a record of a remnant of the house of Israel. (Clifton, Bristol, England, Feb. 11th 1881.) Simon Smith

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[*3. Interview, 1884*]

... We had the opportunity, this morning, to interview Elder Simon Smith, of Cameron, Mo., (the gentleman referred to yesterday who visited Martin Harris before his death,) and asked the following questions, which were answered without hesitancy:

Did you know Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses of the Book of Mormon? Yes sir.

When did you first make his acquaintance? I am not certain, but I think in 1878 [1873].

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11. See n. 5 above.

Were you intimately acquainted with him? Yes.

How long were you acquainted with him? About two years.

What are your convictions of his character as regards veracity? He was a truthful and reliable man so far as my acquaintance with him is concerned.

What was his reputation in this regard? Good. He was considered reliable by all who was acquainted with him.

Did you ever hear him refer to his testimony in connection with the Book of Mormon? Yes, sir.

Did he deny it? No, sir.

Were you present when he died? I was not present at the last moment, but was with him while he was on his death bed, and his son told me that the last words he spoke which were understood by them was in testimony of the angel and the Book of Mormon.

How long before his death did you see him last? About four days.

At the time you saw him last did he say anything in regard to his testimony? Yes; he certified to me that his testimony in connection with the Book of Mormon was true, and added, "I tell you these things that you may tell others. I cannot and dare not deny it lest the power of God should consume me."

Did he seem to be sensible of his approaching death? Yes; as I entered the room he held out his hand to me and said[,] bishop I am going to leave you now.

Did he appear to be in proper possession of his faculties, or was his mind wandering? He had full control of his faculties.

It has been reported that a body of ministers visited his death-bed, and to them he denied his testimony. Do you know anything of this? I was the only minister who visited him. In fact, there were no ministers of other denominations in the town.

How far did you live from where he died? About two blocks.

Were you intimate with the family after his death? Yes, sir.

Did you ever hear them speak of such a visit? No, sir, not them or anyone else. The first I heard of it was here in Stewartsville yesterday.

Where did he die? At Clarkston, Cache county, Utah.

Did he endorse polygamy? No, sir, I asked him the question and he answered[,] no. I asked him if Joseph Smith taught it, and he answered[,] no, nor was it a doctrine of the church in his life. It is Brigham Young's doctrine. ...

[*4. Letter, 30 April 1884*]

CAMERON, Missouri,
April 30th, 1884.

Dear Herald:—Whereas several of the brethren when at last conference, Stewartsville Mo., desired me to write again for your columns the last testimony of Martin Harris, Sen., respecting the divine origin and coming forth of the Book of Mormon; I now again state: That on the 5th day of July, 1875, I visited him at Clarkston, Cache county, Utah Territory, and as it was expected that he would not recover from his sickness, I asked him several questions concerning the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, &c. 1st. Can you still testify of seeing the angel of God and the plates the Book of Mormon was translated from. His answer was, "Yes, I can; for I saw the angel come down from heaven; and he laid the plates before me, and I saw them; and I also heard the voice of God from heaven, commanding me to bear record of the things that I saw, and what is written of the three witnesses in the fore part of the Book of Mormon is true, and I dare not deny it, lest the power of God should consume me." He also said, "I know not why the Lord has permitted me to live so long, only to testify of the truth of the Book of Mormon; and I now tell you these things, that it might be told to others." He also said, "I was Joseph Smith's scribe, and wrote for him a great deal; for he was such a poor writer, and could not even draw up a note of hand as his education was so limited.[12] I also wrote for him about one third of the first part of the translation of the plates as he interpreted them by the Urim and Thummim. And I paid the printer about three thousand dollars for the first edition of the Book of Mormon."

And whereas some parties have said that the said Martin Harris, Sen., denied his testimony as recorded in the said Book of Mormon, on his death-bed, I felt it a duty when I first heard of the report, on the 13th inst., at Stewartsville, Mo., to go before a Justice of the Peace, and make an affidavit to the contrary, which I did on the 14th inst.,[13] to confute such a false statement, and defend the man in his dying moments, and in the integrity of his soul, testifying to the last, to what he had seen, heard, and knew to be true. ...

Yours truly,
SIMON SMITH.

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12. This statement is exaggerated (see I.F.3, EMMA SMITH INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPH SMITH III, FEB 1879, n. 25.)

13. This affidavit has yet to be recovered.

27.
REUBEN P. HARMON STATEMENT, CIRCA 1885

Reuben P. Harmon, Statement to Arthur B. Deming, circa 1885, *Naked Truths About Mormonism* 1 (April 1888): 1.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Reuben P. Harmon is listed in the 1880 census of Kirtland, Geauga County, Ohio, at age sixty-six (1880:6; see also *History of Geauga and Lake Counties,* 1878, 246). According to Harmon's statement, his parents moved to Kirtland from Vermont in 1815. Arthur Deming also gives the following information about him: "Mr. Harmon is one of Kirtland's most intelligent and substantial citizens, owns over 500 acres of land in the town and is well known as an auctioneer in several counties. His statement will not be doubted by those who know him. He was a friend and correspondent of [U.S. president James A.] Garfield." Harmon's statement is undated, but it was likely taken about the same time Deming took other statements from the residents of northern Ohio, that is, December 1884 through May 1885.

... I was well acquainted with Martin Harris, who was often at my house for days at a time. I have questioned him much about the plates from which the "Book of Mormon" purports to have been translated. He never claimed to have seen them with his natural eyes, only spiritual vision.[1] He said it was impossible for the prophet Joseph to get up the "Book of Mormon," for he could not spell the word Sarah. He had him repeat the letters of the word.[2] He was a very illiterate man. ...

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1. Regarding the manner in which Harris saw the plates, see discussion in "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

2. David Whitmer also said Smith spelled out difficult words, and Emma Smith said he could not spell Sarah (probably Sariah, Lehi's wife) (see VI.A.3, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH *CHICAGO TIMES,* AUG 1875; VI.A.17, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH JAMES H. HART, 21 AUG 1883 & 10 MAR 1884; and I.F.1, EMMA SMITH BIDAMON INTERVIEW WITH EDMUND C. BRIGGS, 1856).

[Signed] REUBEN P. HARMON.

Witnessed by:

A. B. DEMING,
GRANVILLE HARMON (Son).[3]

3. Granville Harmon, age twenty-six, is listed with his father in the 1880 census of Kirtland, Geauga County, Ohio (1880:6).

MARTIN HARRIS ADDENDUM

In addition to the documents presented in this collection, the following are occasions on which Martin Harris related his testimony; because these records are either too brief or fragmentary to warrant special treatment, they have been compiled in this addendum.

1. Martin Harris Account, Spring 1831.

"He [Harris] told all about the gold plates, Angels, Spirits, and Jo Smith.—He had seen and handled them all, by the power of God" (*Painesville Telegraph,* 15 March 1831).

2. Martin Harris Account, 1838.

"Martin Harris then bore testimony of its [Book of Mormon] truth and said all would be damned that rejected it" (George A. Smith to Josiah Fleming, 30 March 1838, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah).

3. Martin Harris Interview, 1838.

Caroline Barnes Crosby records in her journal that her husband visited Martin Harris in 1838, and that Harris had related to her sister his testimony "in the strongest terms" (Caroline Barnes Crosby, Journal, 1807-83, Utah Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah).

4. Martin Harris Interview with Joseph Fielding, 1841.

"Martin Harris ... gave me a particular description of the plates and of the Urim and Thummim, &c." (Joseph Fielding to Parley P. Pratt, 20 June 1841, *Millennial Star* 2 [1841]: 52).

5. Martin Harris Testimony to a Group in Birmingham, England, 1846.

"When we came out of the meeting Martin Harris was beset with a crowd in the street, expecting that he would furnish them with material to war against Mormonism; but when he was asked if Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God, he answered yes; and when asked if the Book of Mormon was true, this was his answer: 'Do you know that is the sun shining on us? Because as sure as you know that, I know that Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God, and that he translated that book by the power of God'" (George Mantle to Marietta

Walker, 26 December 1888, *Autumn Leaves* 2 [1889]: 141).

6. Martin Harris Testimony, 1849.

Martin Harris reaffirmed his testimony "with the fluency and zeal of a devotee" (*Rochester Daily American,* 16 November 1849).

7. Martin Harris Testimony, 1855.

Martin Harris "gave us a history of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon; his going to New York and presenting the characters to Professor Anthon, etc." (Thomas Colburn to *St. Louis Luminary,* 2 May 1855, *St. Louis Luminary,* 5 May 1855, 2; cf. "Journal History," 2 May 1855).

8. Martin Harris Interview with David H. Cannon, 1861.

"While east I had some time on my hands so I went to Kirtland and called on Martin Harris, who was one of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon. He took me into the Kirtland Temple and I read to him his testimony as contained in the Book of Mormon, and I asked him if there was any possibility of him having been deceived in regard to the visitation of an angel. He testified to me in all solemnity, although not a member of the Church at that time, that the angel did appear with the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated, and testified that they contained a history of the ancient inhabitants of this continent, and that they had been translated by the gift and power of God. There was a feeling accompanied his testimony, when he bore it, that I have never experienced either or since in any man that I ever heard bear testimony" (Evans and Cannon 1967, 250).

9. Martin Harris Interview with James McKnight, February 1862.

"While at Kirtland, a few days since, Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses of the Book of Mormon, came to see me. ... He has now no home; his son, a worthless scapegrace, with whom he lived, being in prison, and the house deserted. Yet, as you have doubtless often heard, he has never failed to confirm his testimony of the truth of that Book. He says he is going to Utah *as soon as the Lord will release him!*" (James McKnight to George Q. Cannon, 27 February 1862, *Millennial Star* 24 [19 April 1862]: 250-51).

10. Martin Harris Interview with Edward Stevenson, 1870.

"He [Harris] says he saw the plates, handled them and saw the angel that visited Joseph Smith, more than forty years ago. I have made arrangements to emigrate him to Utah, according to his desire, and will start in about two weeks" (*Deseret Evening News* 3 [19 August 1870]: 3).

11. Martin Harris Testimony, September 1870.

"He [Harris] has never failed to bear testimony to the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon. He says it is not a matter of belief on his part, but of knowledge" (*Deseret News,* 7 September 1870).

12. Martin Harris Testimony to Group in Salt Lake City Tabernacle, September 1870.

James Henry Moyle said on 18 March 1945: "I was present, as a boy of 12 years of age, when Martin Harris came to Utah and I heard him bear testimony in the Salt Lake Tabernacle ... and repeated his declaration concerning the divinity of this work and the Book of Mormon" (Sessions 1875, 449). On another occasion, Moyle recalled: "As a boy, soon after this building [the Salt Lake City Tabernacle] was completed, I remember hearing the testimony of Martin Harris in regard to the divinity of the Book of Mormon" (Hinkley 1951, 365).

Charlette Adams reminisced in 1938: "<In> the years 1870 I had the privilidge of hearing Martin Harriss one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, testifie to the truth of its resteration he was an avrage size man looked rather frail, it was in the old Tabernecal wich stood where now stands the asembly Hall in Salt Lake City President Brigham arose ~~le~~ and took Martin Harriss by the arm and in[tro]duced him to the congregation, saying brother Harriss wishes to bare his testimoney regarding the plates of the book of Mormon. [p. 1] he gave greeting wich I do not recall[.] what struck me most, was he streched his right arm & said I would rather have my right arm cut off than den~~ye~~<ie> the knowledge of seeing and handling the plates, and hearing the words of the Angle regarding the truth of the Records, also had the privlidge of shaking hands with him[,] the priv[l]idge wich I esteem[.] Charlotte H B Adams[.] this was written at the age of 85" (Original statement in Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah).

13. Martin Harris Testimonies, September 1870.

Harris's grandniece, Irinda Crandall McEwan, recalled: "[H]undreds of people came to see him [Harris], including President Brigham Young, to talk over with him the details regarding his contact with the Book of Mormon story and of the appearance of the angel to him. She said that anyone who heard Martin Harris describe the scenes and bear his testimony to the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon could not help but be deeply impressed with his sincerity and his absolute conviction of the truth of what he was saying" (Signed report of Harris Family Meeting at Geneva Resort, Utah County, Utah, 3 August 1928, cited in R. L. Anderson 1981, 114-15).

14. Martin Harris Interview with Robert Barter, circa 1870.

William Glen of Cardston, Alberta, Canada, recalled a conversation between Bishop Robert Barter of Wellsville, Utah, and Martin Harris, which occurred shortly after the latter's arrival in Utah in 1870. According to Glen, Barter asked Harris: "Are you sure you saw the Angel and the records of the Book of Mormon in the form of gold plates?" To which Harris replied: "Gentlemen," holding out his hand, "do you see that hand? Are you sure you see it? Or are your eyes playing you a trick or something? No. Well, as sure as you see my hand so sure did I see the Angel and the plates. Brethren, I know I saw and heard these things, and the Lord knows I know these things of which I was spoken are true" (*Deseret News* [church section], 2 October 1943, 6).

15. Martin Harris Statement to Robert Aveson, 10 July 1874.

Robert Aveson visited Springville, Utah, while on vacation, "and there heard the testimony first hand, that Mr. [Martin] Harris actually saw the Angel Moroni with the gold record from which was translated the Book of Mormon" (*Deseret News,* 22 August 1934, 16). Harris stated: "It is not a mere belief, but is a matter of knowledge. I saw the plates and the inscriptions thereon. I saw the angel, and he showed them unto me" (*Deseret News,* 2 April 1927).

16. Martin Harris Statement to Young Men in Clarkston, Utah, circa 1874-75.

"A number of young men (between ages about 17 and 28) went to see Martin Harris. ... 'Brother Harris do you believe the Book of Mormon is true?' He said, 'No, I do not believe it, knowledge supersedes belief. I know it is true. The angel showed me the plates and I heard the voice of God declare they were translated correctly.' He was very earnest and sincere in his testimony" (Document signed by Thomas Godfrey, John Buttars, Alma Jensen, John E. Godfrey, and Charley Shumway, in Louise Wennergren compilation, document 5, 27, cited in James 1983, 97, n. 3).

17. Martin Harris Statement to Apostates, circa 1874-75.

John Thompson reports: "I at one time took a couple of apostates, Henry and John Sermon, to see Martin Harris and to talk to him. One of them asked Mr. Harris if he believed the Book of Mormon to be true, and told them, 'No.' They told him they heard he had never denied the truth of the Book [of Mormon]. He told them he knew it was true and that was past believing" (John Thompson, Autobiography, 7-8, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah).

18. Martin Harris Statements to Theodore Farley, circa 1874-75.

Theodore Farley, whose aunt married one of Martin Harris's sons, recalls the senior Harris's visits to his family's home in Ogden, Utah: "My mother has prepared I don't know how many meals for him [Harris], but always the conversation of the early rise of the Church would be the main subject discussed at the table, and often he would relate what he had formerly stated and knew about Joseph Smith and the work that Joseph Smith had done, and the [p. 1] assistance that he had given to Joseph the Prophet. And he became miffed with the Prophet Joseph because he thought that he should have been one of the leading men in the Church. He had helped Brother Joseph Smith with means to publish the Book of Mormon and to assist him in many other ways, and for that reason, I say, and what he had done for the Church, he became miffed; but it would nearly always wind up with the testimony that you find here recorded in the Book of Mormon. He stated that he stood in broad day light, when an angel from Heaven came down with the plates in his arms, and he stood side by side with the angel when the angel did turn over leaf after leaf of the book that had been translated into our language—the English language—until he became perfectly satisfied that he had seen enough, and further, that after the angel had shown him the plates and disappeared, he heard a voice from Heaven that thrilled every fiber of his body, stating that the book had been translated by the gift and power of God, and not of man, and he was commanded by the Lord to so make that statement to the world. And he did. Now it was my privilege to hear Martin Harris relate that, time and time again at our table where my mother, as I stated, prepared many a meal for him while he was visiting with his son, Joseph Harris" ("Talk given by Theodore Farley, Sr., at Priesthood Session of Sharon Stake Quarterly Conference, March 23, 1940," 1-2, typescript, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah).

19. Martin Harris Statement in the Presence of Sarah Keep Buttars, circa 1874-75.

While Sarah Keep Buttars was talking with Martin Harris in his backyard in Clarkston, Utah, a stranger approached them and asked Harris if he believed the Book of Mormon true, to which Harris responded: "No I don't believe it!" The stranger somewhat surprised said: "You don't?" Harris rising to his feet said in a firm voice, "No, I don't believe it. I know it! I saw the plates of gold! I saw and angel! I heard the voice of God! I know that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God! If you were to place my head on the chopping block and threaten me with that axe I could not deny it. I wouldn't dare!" (Royal Keith Buttars, Excerpt from Personal History of Nathan Blain Winters, 1924, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah).

Comfort E. Godfrey Flinders related a similar story about Martin Harris that occurred at her father's home in Clarkston, Utah: "Half a dozen boys were discussing the testimony of Martin Harris who was seen coming up the street towards them. Upon seeing him one of them said: 'Here come the old man now; let's ask him if he really saw the plates.' Upon arriving at the point where the boys were they asked him the question 'Did you really see the plates?' He said, 'Can you see that chopping block?' (upon which some of the boys were sitting). 'Yes,' replied the boys. 'Well, just as plain as you see that chopping block, I saw the plates and sooner than I would deny it I would lay my head upon that chopping block and let you chop it off'" (Dictated to N. B. Lundwall, 2 September 1943, cited in Ravsten and Ravsten 1966, 176).

20. Martin Harris Deathbed Statements, July 1875.

Martin Harris, Jr., states: "He [Harris] was taken ill a week ago yesterday with some kind of a stroke. ... He has continued to talk about and testify to the truth of the Book of Mormon, and was in his happiest mood when he could get somebody to listen to his testimony. ... The last audible words he has spoken were something about the three witnesses of the Book of Mormon" (Martin Harris, Jr., to George A. Smith, 9 July 1875, cited in Kirkham 1951, 1:250).

On 10 July 1875, the day Martin Harris died, Harris said to William Harrison Homer: "Yes, I did see the plates on which the Book of Mormon was written; I did see the angel; I did hear the voice of God; and I know that Joseph Smith is a Prophet of God, holding the keys of the Holy Priesthood" (William Harrison Homer, "The Passing of Martin Harris," *Improvement Era* 29 [March 1926]: 472). "Yes, I did see the angel. I heard his voice. I saw and handled the plates upon which the Book of Mormon was written, and translated by the Prophet Joseph Smith, whom I also bear testimony was a true prophet of the living God" ("Testimony given by Brother W. H. Homer, January 3, 1922," typescript, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah).

George Godfrey visited Martin Harris a few hours before his death and asked the dying witness "if he did not feel that there was an element, at least, of fraud=ulence and deception in the things that were written and told of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon," to which Harris responded: "The Book of Mormon is no fake. I know what I know. I have seen what I have seen, and I have heard what I have heard. I have seen ~~and handled~~ the gold plates from which the Book of Mormon is written. An angel appeared to me and others and testified to the truthfulness of the record, and had I been willing to have perjured myself and sworn falsely to the testimony I now bear, I could have been a rich man, but I could not have testified other than I have done and

~~now~~ am now doing, for these things are true" (George Godfrey, Affidavit, 29 October 1921, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah).

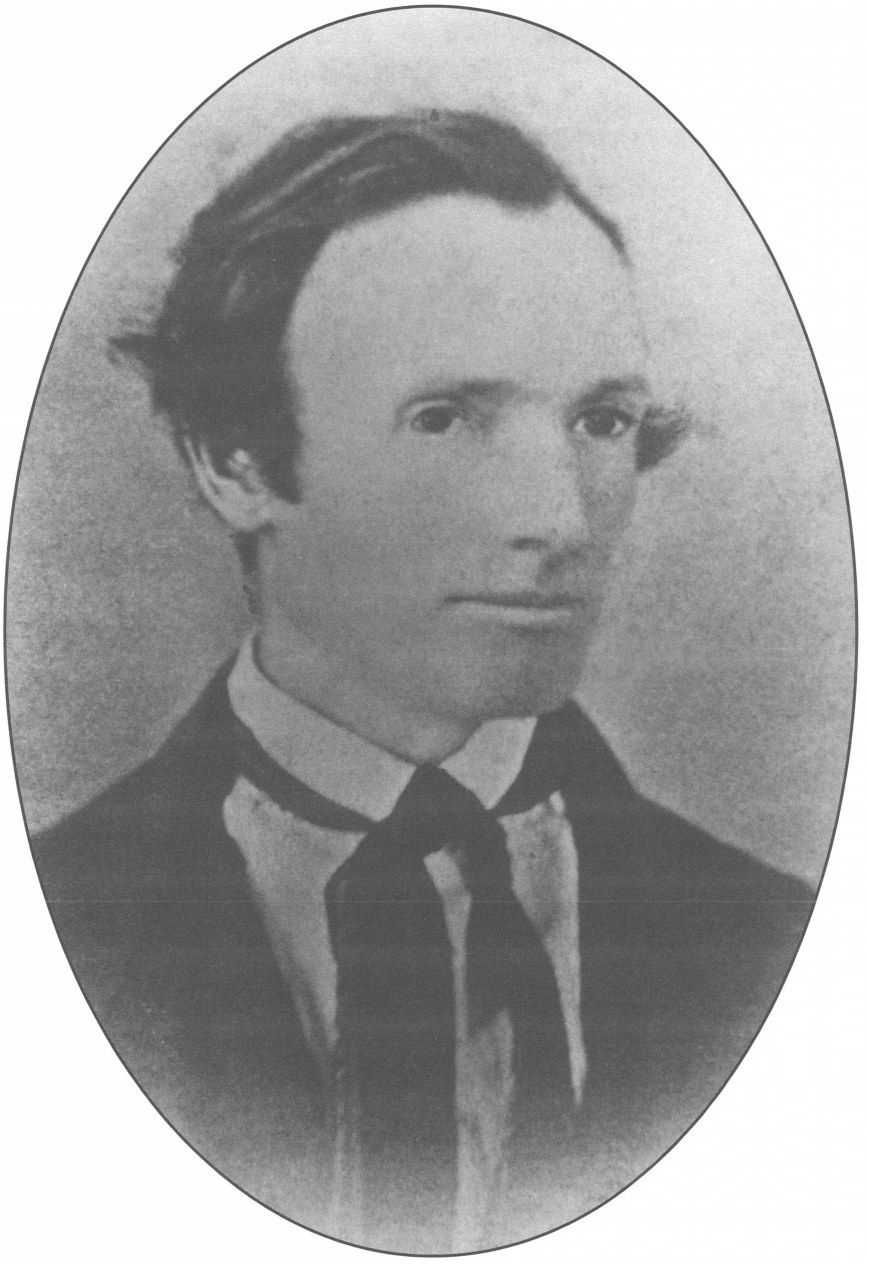
21. Sariah Harris Steele Reminiscence, August 1928.

Sariah Harris Steele, Martin Harris's granddaughter, said: "She had sat on his [Harris's] lap many times and heard him bear testimony to the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon record" (F. S. Harris, Notes of Harris family meeting, 3 August 1928, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah).

G.

Oliver Cowdery

COLLECTION



Oliver Cowdery, circa 1846. Daguerreotype by unknown photographer. Courtesy Library-Archives, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, The Auditorium, Independence, Missouri.

INTRODUCTION TO OLIVER COWDERY COLLECTION

Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), perhaps the most significant individual connected with Mormon origins other than Joseph Smith, was born 3 October 1806 at Wells, Rutland County, Vermont. One source described Cowdery as "a small, quiet and retiring man" (*Deseret Evening News,* 10 March 1896, quoting the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*). Very little is known about Cowdery's early life, but he is said to have been a printer and book peddler in New York and Canada in 1822 or 1823 (*Cleveland Herald,* 25 November 1830; see also *Ashtabula Journal,* 4 December 1830; *Western Reserve Chronicle,* 9 December 1830; III.K.9, *LOCKPORT* (NY) *BALLANCE,* 1832). According to Lucy P. Young, Cowdery's step-sister, "Oliver was brought to us in Poultney, Rutland County, Vermont, and when he arrived at the age of twenty [c. 1825] he went to the State of New York where his older brothers were married and settled. ... Oliver's occupation was clerking in a store until 1829 [1828?] when he taught the District School in the town of Manchester" (Lucy P. Young to Andrew Jenson, 7 March 1887, typescript, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah). Oliver evidently worked at his brother Warren's store at Lyons, Wayne County, New York, until about late 1828, when he went to Manchester, New York, in order to replace his brother Lyman as school teacher there (see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:90; see also Barrett 1973, 88).

At Manchester Cowdery moved in with the Smith family and taught school during the winter (1828-29). Cowdery soon learned about the gold plates and Joseph Smith's gift to translate them. When he learned that Samuel intended to visit Joseph in Harmony, Pennsylvania, Cowdery told the Smiths, according to Lucy Smith, "I have made it a subject of prayer and I firmly believe that it is the will of the Lord that I should go and that there is a work for me to do in this thing and I am determined if there is to attend to it." Lucy recalled, "We told him that we thought it was his priviledge to know whether this was the case and advised him to seek for a testimony ... <for himself> he did so and received the wit=ness spoken of in the book of doctrine and covenants [6:22-24]." After this experience, Lucy noticed that Cowdery became "entirely absorbed in the sub=ject of the record that it seemed impossible for him to thin<k> or converse about anything else" (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:91).

Cowdery's writings from this period reflect his intense feelings. In a letter to Joseph Smith, dated 6 November 1829, Cowdery says, "when I think of the goodness of christ I feel no desire to live or stay here upon the shores of this world of iniquity. ... This writing is to inform you of my prospects and hopes and my desires and my longing to be freed from sin and to rest in the King=dom of my Savior" (III.G.2, OLIVER COWDERY TO JOSEPH SMITH, 6 NOV 1829, 7). On 28 December 1829 Cowdery wrote to Smith and again expressed some of the strong feelings he was experiencing. "Some times I feel almost as though I could quit time and fly away and be at rest in the bosom of my Redeemer for the many deep feelings of sorrow and the many long struglings in pray[er]s of sorrow for the Sins of my fellow beings ... almost as it were seperateth my spirit from my mortal body," Cowdery wrote. "I would that you should under=stand [it] is my anxiety at some times to be at rest ... in the Paradice of my God" (III.G.3, OLIVER COWDERY TO JOSEPH SMITH, 28 DEC 1829). In about June 1829, Cowdery received a revelation concerning church government. The document which contains this revelation states: "I have written the things which he [God] hath commanded me for behold his word was unto me as a burning fire shut up in my bones & I was weary with forbearing & I could forebear no longer" (III.G.4, OLIVER COWDERY REVELATION, 1829).

On 5 April 1829 Oliver and Samuel arrived at Harmony, where Cowdery became Joseph Smith's scribe for the majority of the Book of Mormon's translation. Soon after Smith commenced translating, he dictated a revelation which appeared to read Cowdery's thoughts: "Behold, thou knowest that thou hast inquired of me and I did enlighten thy mind; and now I tell thee these things that thou mayest know that thou has been enlightened by the Spirit of truth; yea, I tell thee, that thou mayest know that there is none else save God that knowest thy thoughts and the intents of thy heart. I tell thee these things as a witness unto thee—that the words or the work which thou has been writing are true" (LDS D&C 6:15-17).

Cowdery immediately wrote a letter to David Whitmer declaring Smith's ability to read his thoughts and that he was convinced of Smith's story (VI.A.7, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH ORSON PRATT AND JOSEPH F. SMITH, 7-8 SEP 1878; VI.A.12, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH *KANSAS CITY JOURNAL,* 1 JUN 1881; and VI.A.17, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH JAMES H. HART, 21 AUG 1833 & 10 MAR 1884). While proof for such things is always a personal matter, some would have required more. Skeptics might have noticed that the revelation itself contains an assumption Smith could

have made on his own: "Thou hast received instruction of my Spirit. If it had not been so, thou wouldst not have come to the place where thou art at this time" (6:14). But Cowdery did not come for proof, his mind had already been made up.

While Martin Harris had only sought to become a devout follower, Cowdery came with competing gifts. He was not long content with being scribe, but soon began expressing a desire to translate. A revelation dictated by Smith indicates that Cowdery in addition to possessing the "Spirit of revelation" also had a "gift of working with the rod," evidently referring to his use of a divining rod (BofC VII:3; Quinn 1987, 31-35). When Cowdery failed in his attempt to translate, he was told to continue as scribe (D&C 6:25-28; 8:11; 9:1-12). This early event helped define Smith's and Cowdery's respective roles. Also about this time, Smith dictated a portion of the translation which defined a "seer," or one who possesses a gift of seeing in a stone, as being greater than a prophet (Mos. 8:13-18).

As the translation drew to a close in late June 1829, Cowdery became one of three special witnesses to the Book of Mormon. But, unlike Martin Harris and David Whitmer, Cowdery left only brief statements about this visionary experience, usually simple affirmations (see III.G.14, OLIVER COWDERY COURT STATEMENT, CIRCA 1840-1848; III.G.16, OLIVER COWDERY COUNCIL BLUFFS [IA] TESTIMONY, 21 OCT 1848; III.G.17, OLIVER COWDERY TESTIMONY, 13 JAN 1849; and "Oliver Cowdery Addendum"). The rarity of Cowdery's statements is likely due to his early death, while the bulk of Harris's and Whitmer's statements were made years later. Yet Cowdery's willingness to describe other early visionary experiences in detail makes his brevity about his vision of the plates remarkable. In fact, Smith's 1832 History seems to suggest that Cowdery's experience with the plates may have pre-dated Whitmer's and Harris's by several months. According to Smith's earliest History, "[the] Lord appeared unto a young man by the name of Oliver Cowdry and shewed unto him the plates in a vision and also the truth of the work and what the Lord was about to do through me his unworthy servant therefore he was desirous to come and write for me" (I.A.7, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1832, 6).

In addition to his vision of the plates, Cowdery also testified to two other visions during the New York/Pennsylvania period of church history. The first occurred in connection with Smith's and Cowdery's baptisms on 15 May 1829. While it was well known that Smith and Cowdery had received a commandment to baptize one another in the Susquehanna River (e.g., I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:94), many early Mormons were apparently unaware that the two men had at the same time received an

angelic ordination (e.g., VI.A.24, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH ZENAS H. GURLEY, 14 JAN 1885, 2). Smith alluded to "the reception of the holy Priesthood by the ministring of Aangels" in 1832, but this account remained unfinished and unpublished (I.A.7, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1832, 1). In 1834 Smith and Cowdery began making public announcements that angelic ordination to the "Aaronic priesthood" had preceded their baptisms (I.A.8, JOSEPH SMITH RECITAL TO KIRTLAND [OH] HIGH COUNCIL, 12 FEB & 21 APR 1834; and III.G.6, OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, 7 SEP 1834, 15-16). Cowdery did not identify the angel in 1834, but Smith said it was John the Baptist (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 18).

In the mid-1830s Smith and Cowdery also began claiming that the ancient apostles Peter, James, and John had appeared soon after their baptisms and ordained them to the Melchizedek priesthood (see esp. III.G.12, OLIVER COWDERY STATEMENTS, SEP & OCT 1835; III.G.15, OLIVER COWDERY TO PHINEAS H. YOUNG, 23 MAR 1846; III.G.16, OLIVER COWDERY COUNCIL BLUFFS [IA] TESTIMONY, 29 OCT 1848; I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 18). Unlike the account of their previous angelic ordination, neither Cowdery nor Smith dated the reception of this higher authority. Because the announcement of these two angelic ordinations coincides with the later development of two priesthoods, beginning in June 1831, some historical caution is justified (see Vogel 1988, 101-106).

On 6 April 1830 the church was officially organized with Cowdery as its "second elder" (LDS D&C 20:3). In October 1830 he led a mission to Ohio and Missouri, which resulted in the important conversion of Sidney Rigdon and others in the Kirtland, Ohio, area and the establishment of the New Jerusalem in Independence, Missouri.

After Cowdery had rejoined the Saints gathering in northern Ohio, he was ordained by Rigdon to the high priesthood in August 1831. On 18 December 1832 he married Elizabeth Ann Whitmer, sister of David Whitmer, and together they parented six children. In October 1834 he became editor of the church's periodical *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* published in Kirtland (1834-37). On 5 December 1834 he was ordained assistant president of the church. On 3 April 1836, in connection with the dedication of the Kirtland temple, he and Smith received additional priesthood keys from Elijah, Elias, and Moses (LDS D&C 110). He left Kirtland for Missouri in October 1837.

In April 1838 Cowdery was excommunicated by church leaders in Far West, Missouri, for apostasy. Soon after, he moved to Tiffin, Ohio, where

he practiced law. Cowdery evidently lived a short time in Elkhorn, Wisconsin, where he unsuccessfully ran for the state legislature in 1848. On 12 November 1848, as a group of Mormons prepared to emigrate to Utah, Cowdery was rebaptized by Orson Hyde at Kanesville, Iowa. Cowdery did not go west, but unexpectedly fell ill and died on 3 March 1850 at Richmond, Ray County, Missouri (see L. Cook 1981, 14; R. L. Anderson 1981, 37-65).

1.
OLIVER COWDERY TO HYRUM SMITH, 14 JUNE 1829

Oliver Cowdery to Hyrum Smith, 14 June 1829, Joseph Smith Letterbook, 1:5-6, Joseph Smith Papers, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Joseph Smith had just returned to Fayette from Manchester, New York, where negotiations for printing the Book of Mormon were initiated with Palmyra publisher Egbert B. Grandin, when Cowdery wrote the present letter to Hyrum Smith. Cowdery expressed concern about Hyrum's "steadfastness" in his May 1829 calling to declare the gospel (LDS D&C 11). While it is known that Hyrum was baptized sometime in June 1829 by Joseph Smith in Seneca Lake (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 23), the exact date is a matter of conjecture. The tone of the present letter, dated 14 June 1829, together with Cowdery's calling himself "A fellow labourer in the cause of Zion," seem to indicate that Hyrum had accepted his call by being baptized, perhaps in the first days of June 1829.

The wording of Cowdery's letter is apparently influenced by LDS D&C 18, indicating that this revelation was probably dictated by Smith in June sometime before the 14th (Porter 1979). Following the sequence of events in Smith's 1839 History, this would imply that Hyrum and the Whitmers had been baptized before the reception of this revelation (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 21-23, 29).

The original letter is evidently no longer extant, but the following document was copied into Joseph Smith's letterbook in 1832 by Frederick G. Williams.

Let[ter] 3 Fayette June the 14[,] 1829

Dear Brother Hyram[1]

These few lines I write unto you feeling anxious for your steadfastness in the great cause of which you have been called to advocate and also feeling

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1. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

it a duty to wr=ite to you at every opportunity[.] remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God behold the Lord [p. 5] Your God suffered death upon the cross after the manner of the flesh wherefore he suffered the pains of all men that all men might repent and come unto him and he and he hath risen again from the dead that he might bring all men unto him upon conditions of repentance and how great is his Joy in the soul that repents and behold he commandeth all men to every where to repent and ~~not only~~ [be] baptised and not only men but women [and] children which have arrived to the years of acountibility[.] Stir up the minds of our friends against the time we come unto you[,] that thus they may be willing to take upon them the name of christ for that is the name by which they shall be called at the Last day and if we know not not the name by which we are called I <fear> we shall be found on the [left] hand I have many things to write but if the Lord will I shall shortly come unto you[.] Please tell Mrs Rockwell[2] that those shose [shoes] fit well and I received them as from the Lord tell him[3] that what=ever he does in the cause of Zion—he will in no wise loose his reward[.] Now m[a]y the Grace of God the Father and of our Lord Jesus Christ be and abide with you all[,] Amen[.] This from your Bro[t]h[er] Oliver A fellow labourer in the cause of Zion

Oliver <HP> Cowdry

Hyram Smith

PS give my love to <all those> who anxiously inquire after my pro[s]perity &c

2. On Sarah Witt Rockwell (1785-?), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 90.

3. Perhaps a reference to Orin Rockwell, husband of Sarah Rockwell, who may have originally owned the shoes.

2.
OLIVER COWDERY TO JOSEPH SMITH, 6 NOVEMBER 1829

Oliver Cowdery to Joseph Smith, 6 November 1829, Joseph Smith Letterbook, 1:6-8, Joseph Smith Papers, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

EDITORIAL NOTE

After arrangements for printing the Book of Mormon had been made with Egbert B. Grandin at Palmyra, New York, Joseph Smith returned to his home in Harmony, Pennsylvania. Smith had directed Oliver Cowdery to remain in Manchester in order to oversee the printing of the Book of Mormon and to continue preparing a second copy of the translation manuscript for use by the typesetter. In response to Smith's letter of 22 October 1829 (see I.A.1, JOSEPH SMITH TO OLIVER COWDERY, 22 OCT 1829), Cowdery penned the following letter, dated 6 November 1829, wherein among other things he reported that the printing was proceeding slowly and that he had copied the manuscript up to Alma chapter 36.

The original of Cowdery's letter has evidently not survived, but it was copied into Joseph Smith's letterbook in 1832 by Frederick G. Williams.

Let[ter] 4 Manchester November the 6th 1829

Brother Joseph Smith Jr

I received your let[t]er yesterday bearing date Oct 22d I had long time expected to hear from you and had often enquired at the post office for a letter and of course it was gladly received by us all we rejoice to hear that you are well and we ~~expect~~ also rejoice to hear that you have a prospect of obtaining some mon[e]y[1] and we further rejo[i]c[e] that you are at rest from your percecutors[2] and we rejoic[e] [p. 6] and the most to hear of your

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1. Smith's letter mentioned that Josiah Stowell hoped to get five or six hundred dollars in order to purchase copies of the Book of Mormon (see I.A.1, JOSEPH SMITH TO OLIVER COWDERY, 22 OCT 1829).

2. Smith had written that "the people are all friendly to <us> except a few ... and two of our most formadable persacutors are now under censure and are cited to a tryal in the church" (I.A.1, JOSEPH SMITH TO

faithfulness in christ my dear Brother when I think of the goodness of christ I feel no desire to live or stay here upon the shores of this world of iniquity only to to ser[v]e ~~him~~ my maker and be if possible an instrument in his hands of doing some good in his cause with his <grace> to assist me when I consider and try to realise what he has done for me I am astonished and amazed[.] why should I not be[?] for while I was rushing on in sin and [winding?] my way down to that awful gulf he yet strove with me and praised be his holy ~~name~~ <and> [sacred?] name he has redeemed my soul from endless torment and wo not for any thing that I have me[r]ited or any worthyness there was in me for there was none but it was in and through his own mercy wrought out by his own infinite wisdom by proposing from all Eternity a means wherefore man could be saved on conditions of repentance and faith on that infinite attonement whic<h> was to be mad[e] by a great and last sacrif[i]ce which sacr[i]fice was the death of the only begotten of the Father[,] yea the eter=nal Father of Heaven and of Earth that by his resere=ction all the Family of man might be brought back into the presance of God if therefore we follow christ in all things whatsoever he comma[n]deth us and are buried with him by baptism into death that like as christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Eter=nal Father even so we also should walk in newn=ess of life and if we walk in newness of life to the end of this probation at the day of accounts we shall be caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air but I need not undertake to write of the goodness of God for his goodness is unspeakable ne[i]ther tell of the miste=ries of God for what is man that he can comprehend and search out the wisdom of deity for great is the misteries of Godliness therefore my only motive in this writing is to inform you of my prospects and hopes and my desires and my longing to be freed from sin and to rest in the King=dom of my Savior and my redeemer when I [p. 7] begin to write of the mercys of God I know not when to stop but time and paper fail[.] I would inform [you] that Hyram[3] and Martin[4] went out to fayette last week they had a joyful time and found all in as good health as could be expected Martin th=inks of coming to the South in the course of two or three weeks and will callculate to take back that horse[.][5] the printing goes

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OLIVER COWDERY, 22 OCT 1829).

3. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

4. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

5. Smith had bought a horse from Josiah Stowell, evidently giving him a note (I.A.1, JOSEPH SMITH TO OLIVER COWDERY, 22 OCT 1829). Apparently the note had not been paid at the time of the Bainbridge,

rather slow yet as the type founder has been sick but we expect that the type will be in[6] and Mr Granden[7] still think[s] ~~we~~ <he> will finish printing by the first of feb[r]uary[8] we all send respects to yourself and Emma

My dear Brother I cannot hardly feel to close this letter as yet without informing you that we received one from Mr Marsh[9] from Boston[,] Masacuchusetts dated the 25th Oct. he informs us that he wishes to hear from us and Know of our welfare he says he has talked conside[r]able to some respecting o[u]r work with freedom but others could not because they had no ears my great desire is that we may be faithful and obedient and humble children of christ here that we may meet together in his Kingdom of Eternal Glory to go no more out[,] to spend an Ete[r]nity where the wicked ce[a]se from troubling and the humble and penitent child in christ finds rest I remain with much Esteem and profound respect your Brother and compa[n]ion in tribulation and persecution in the Kingdom of patience and hope of a glorious reserrecti=on in christ our savior and rede[e]mer Amen

Oliver Cowdry

Joseph Smith Jr

Let[ter] 5 PS I have Just got to alma[s] command=ment to his sons [Al. 36] in coppying the manu[sc]=ript we are all in tolerable he[a]lth here but my Father[s][10] health is poor

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New York, trial in July 1830 (see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 45; and IV.A.3, NEWEL KNIGHT AUTOBIOGRAPHY, CIRCA 1846, 56).

6. John H. Gilbert said that "Mr. Grandin got a new font of Small Pica, on which the body of the work [Book of Mormon] was printed" and that "Grandin went to New York and bought the type—500 pounds of new small pica" (III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 2; see also III.H.11, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1893).

7. On Egbert B. Grandin (1806-45), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 77.

8. Grandin evidently failed to meet his "first of feb[r]uary" deadline as John H. Gilbert said the first books were finished in March 1830 (III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 3, 4).

9. On Thomas B. Marsh (1799-1866), see III.K.22, THOMAS MARSH AUTOBIOGRAPHY, 1857.

10. William Cowdery (1765-1847), father of Oliver Cowdery, was born at East Haddam, Middlesex County, Connecticut. He married Rebecca Fuller about 1787, and fathered eight children. He joined the LDS church in New York and moved to Kirtland, Ohio, where he later died (Jessee 1989, 482).

3.
OLIVER COWDERY TO JOSEPH SMITH, 28 DECEMBER 1829

Oliver Cowdery to Joseph Smith, 28 December 1829, Joseph Smith Letterbook, 1:4-5, Joseph Smith Papers, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

EDITORIAL NOTE

On 28 December 1829 Oliver Cowdery wrote to Joseph Smith in Harmony, Pennsylvania, briefly mentioning his participation in the work of printing the Book of Mormon and expressing great anxiety over his calling. Cowdery's letter followed the discovery earlier in the month of Abner Cole's plan to publish extracts from the Book of Mormon in his *Palmyra Reflector.* Cowdery's mention that Joseph Sr. was planning to go "directly" to Harmony for the purpose of bringing Joseph Jr. to Palmyra/Manchester to settle the matter with Cole, perhaps to bring legal action if necessary, is confirmed by Lucy Smith (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:112). Joseph Sr.'s trip, however, must have been delayed because Cole continued to publish extracts in his paper on 2, 13, and 22 January 1830 (see introduction to III.E.3, *PALMYRA REFLECTOR,* 1829-1831). That Cowdery did not detail the reasons for Joseph Sr.'s trip seems to imply that an earlier letter had been sent explaining the Cole problem.

Cowdery's original letter is evidently not extant, but it was copied into Joseph Smith's letterbook in 1832 by Frederick G. Williams.

Let[ter] 2 Manchester December 28th AD 1829

Brother Joseph Smith Jr—

It may seem supe[r]fluous for me to write as Father [p. 4] is going directly to your country[1] but knowing that if a few lines from ~~you~~ under my hand is

1. Evidently a reference to Joseph Smith, Sr. (see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:112). Cowdery's use of "directly" implies an urgency. However, Cole was able to publish three more extracts from the Book of Mormon (2, 13, and 22 January 1830) before Joseph Jr. presumably confronted him. Delay may have resulted from three possible factors: (1) weather conditions; (2) Joseph Sr.'s appearance with Abraham Fish before Jus-

as gladly received by you as one from you would at all times be by me[,] I cannot in duty to my fee=lings let this opportunity <pass> u[n]inproved[.] Your great anxiety will probably be to know of the progress of the work in the which we are <so deeply> engaged and possibly our souls wellfare all of which Father can make known unto you[.] it may ~~[-]~~ look rather strange to you to find that I have so soon become a printer[2] and you may cast in your mind what I shall become next but be as[s]ured my c<h>anging business has not in any degree I trust taken my mind from meditating upon my mission which I have been called to fulfill nor of ~~changing~~ slacking my diligence in prayer and fasting but but some times I feel almost as though I could quit time and fly away and be at rest in the Bosom of my Redeemer for the many deep feelings of sorrow and the many long struglings in pray[er]s of sorrow for the Sins of my fellow beings and also for those who pretend to be of my faith almost as it were seperateth my spirit from my mortal body[.] do not thin=k by this my Brother that I ~~am~~ would ~~find~~ give you to und=erstand that I am freed from sin and temptations[.] no[,] not by any means[.] that is what I would that you should under=stand is my anxiety at some times to be at rest in ~~King in~~ the Paradice of my God is to be freed from ~~sin~~ tem=ptation &c[.] You have our pray[e]rs and our best wishes

Yours in Christ Amen
Oliver <HP> Cowdry

Joseph Smith Jr

PS we send our respects to Emma &c

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tice Nathan Pierce on 19 January in the case of Lemuel Durfee, Jr. (see III.L.19, NATHAN PIERCE DOCKET BOOK, 1830); and (3) the possible reception of a letter from Joseph Jr. requesting a delay for his own reasons.

2. It was claimed that Cowdery was a printer and book peddler in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1822 or 1823 (*Cleveland Herald,* 25 November 1830).

4.
OLIVER COWDERY REVELATION, 1829

Oliver Cowdery, "A commandment from God unto Oliver [Cowdery] how he should build up his church & the manner thereof," circa June 1829, Joseph Smith Papers, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

EDITORIAL NOTE

The following document is "A commandment from God unto Oliver [Cowdery] how he should build up his church & the manner thereof. ... A true Copy of the articles of the Church of Christ." The exact date is not given, but it was "Written in the year of our Lord & Saviour 1829." Since the document at several points seems dependent on LDS D&C 18, Cowdery's revelation was probably composed sometime during or following June 1829. Also, since Cowdery's revelation formed the basis for LDS D&C 20, the "Articles and Covenants of the Church of Christ" (see L. Cook 1981, 125, n. 3), and Smith's 1839 History places section 20 in a June 1829 context (rather than June 1830, the date of its composition) (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 29-34), it is possible that Cowdery's revelation dates to June 1829.

Regarding the historical background of Cowdery's revelation, Ezra Booth states:

> Cowdery's desires for this work were so keen and excessive, as, to use his own language, "it was unto me a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could forbear no longer;" and he did in fact, issue some productions, which he said bore the divine impress; but Smith fixed upon them the stamp of devilish (Howe 1834, 214).

When Smith substituted Cowdery's revelation with one of his own (LDS D&C 20), Cowdery and the Whitmers strongly objected because it gave church authorities too much power (v. 37). However, after Smith had reasoned with them, he finally convinced them that the disputed passage was "reasonable and according to scripture" (see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 51; Vogel 1988, 135).

This three-page document is a "Copy" of the original, which apparently is no longer extant. According to Dean C. Jessee, it is in the handwriting of Oliver Cowdery. The document was somehow acquired by Symonds Ryder (1792-1870), who apostatized from the LDS church in the fall of 1831,

and was preserved through four generations of the Ryder family. In 1959 Wayne and Virginia (Ryder) Watters of Ravenna, Ohio, turned the document over to Brenda Daily, a member of the LDS church living in the area, who eventually handed it over to the Church Historian (see Woodford 1989, 262-63; Faulring 1996, 3-5).

A commandment from God unto Oliver [Cowdery] how he should build up his church & the manner thereof—

Saying Oliver listen to the voice of Christ your Lord & your God & your Redeemer & write the words which I shall command you concerning my Church my Gospel my Rock & my Salvation [LDS D&C 18:4, 17]. Behold the world is ripening in in=iquity & it must needs be that the children of men are stirred up unto repentance both the Gentiles & also the House of Israel [LDS D&C 18:6] for behold I command all men every where to repent & I speak unto you even as unto Paul mine apostle for ye are called even with that same calling with which he was called [LDS D&C 18:9][.] Now therefore whoso=ever repenteth & humbleth himself before me & desireth to be baptized in my name shall ye baptize them [3 Ne. 11:23 / LDS D&C 20:37][.] And after this manner did he command me that I should baptize them[.] Behold ye shall go down & stand in the water & in my name shall ye baptize them[.] And now behold these are the words which ye shall say calling them by name saying[:] Having authority given me of Jesus Christ I baptize you in the name of the Father & of the Son & of the Holy Ghost Amen[.] And then shall ye immerse them in the water & come forth again out of the water & after this manner shall ye baptize in my name [3 Ne. 11:23-27 / LDS D&C 20:73-74][.] For behold verily I say unto you that the Father & the Son & the Holy Ghost are one & I am in the Father & the Father in me & the Father & I are one [3 Ne. 11:27 / LDS D&C 20:27-28][.]

And ye are also called to ordain Priests & Teachers according to the gifts & callings of God unto men [LDS D&C 18:32 / 20:60] & after this manner shall ye ordain them[:] Ye shall pray unto the Father in my name & then shall ye lay your hands upon them & say[:] In the name of Jesus Christ I ordain you to be a Priest, or if he be a Teacher[,] I ordain you to be a Teacher to preach repentance & remission of sins through Jesus Christ by the endurance of faith on his name to the end Amen [Moro. 3:2-3][.] And this shall be the duty of the Priest[.] He shall kneel down & the members of the Church shall kneel also [Moro. 4:2] which Church shall be called The Church of Christ & he shall pray to the Father in my name for the church & if it be so that it be built upon my Rock I will bless it[.] And after that ye have prayed to the Father in my name ye shall preach the truth in soberness

casting out none from among you but rather invite them to come [3 Ne. 18:22-25; 27:8][.] And the Church shall oft partake of bread & wine & after this manner shall ye partake of it[.] The Elder or Priest shall minister it & after this manner shall he do[:] he shall kneel with the Church & pray to the Father in the name of Christ & then shall ye say O God the Eternal <Father> [p. 1] we ask thee in the name of thy Son Jesus Christ to bless & sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it that they may ~~eat~~ <eat> in remembrance of the body of thy Son & witness unto thee O God the Eternal Father that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son & always remember him & keep his commandments whi=ch he hath given them that they may always have his spirit to be with them Amen [Moro. 4:1-3 / LDS D&C 20:76-77][.] And then shall ye take the cup & say O God the Eternal Father we ask thee in the name of thy Son Jesus Christ to bless & sanctify this wine to the souls of all those who drink of it that they may do [it] in remembrance of the blood of thy Son which was shed for them that they may witness unto thee O God the Eternal Father that they do always remember him that they may have his spirit to be with them Amen [Moro. 5:1-2 / LDS D&C 20:79][.] And now behold I give unto you a commandment that ye shall not suffer any one kno=wingly to partake of my flesh & blood unworthily when ye shall minister it for whoso eateth and drinketh my flesh & blood unworthily eateth & drinketh damnation to his soul[.] Therefore if ye know that a man is unworthy to eat & drink of my flesh & blood ye shall forbid him nevertheless ye shall not cast him out from among you but ye shall minis=ter unto him & shall pray for him unto the Father in my name & if it so be that he repenteth & is baptized in my name then shall ye receive him & shall minister unto him of my flesh & blood but if he repenteth not he shall not be numbered among my people that he may not destroy my people[.] For behold I know my sheep & they are numbered nevertheless ye shall not cast him out of your Synagogues or your places of worship for unto such shall ye continue to minister for ye know not but what they will return & repent & come unto me with full purpose of heart & I shall ~~heal~~ <heal> them & ye shall be the means of bringing Salvation unto them[.] Therefore keep these sayings which I have commanded you that ye come not under condemnation for wo unto him whom the Father condemneth [3 Ne. 18:28-33]—

And the church shall meet together oft for prayer & suplication casting out none from your places of worship but rather invite them to come[.] And each member shall speak & tell the church of their progress in the way of Eternal life [3 Ne. 18:22-25; Moro. 6:5]. And there shall be no pride nor envying nor strifes nor malice nor idoletry nor witch crafts nor whoredoms

nor fornications nor covetiousness nor lying nor de=ceits nor no manner of iniquity & if any one is guilty of any or the least of these & doth not repent & show fruits meet for repentance they shall not be number=ed among my people that they may not destroy my people [3 Ne. 18:31][.] [p. 2]

And now I speak unto the Church[:] Repent all ye ends of the Earth & come unto me & be baptized in my name which is Jesus Christ & endure to the end & ye shall be saved[.] Behold Jesus Christ is the name which is given of the Father & there is none other name given whereby men can be saved[.] Therefore all men must take upon them the name which is given of the Father for in that name shall they be called at the last day[.] Therefore if they know not the name by which they are called they cannot have place in the kingdom of my Father [LDS D&C 18:22-25][.] Behold ye must walk uprightly before me & sin not & if ye do walk uprightly before me & sin not my grace is sufficient for you that ye shall be lifted up at the last day [LDS D&C 18:31; 17:8][.] Behold I am Jesus Christ the Son of the living God[.] I am the same which came unto my own & my own received me not[.] I am the light which shineth in darkness & the darkness comprehendeth it not[.] these words are not of men nor of man but of me [LDS D&C 18:34][.] Now remember the words of him who is the first & the last the light & the life of the world[.] And I Jesus Christ your Lord & your God & your Redeemer by the power of my Spirit have spoken it Amen [LDS D&C 18:47]—And now if I have not authority to write these things judge ye behold ye shall know that I have authority when you & I shall be brought to stand before the judgment seat of God[.] Now may [the grace][1] of God the Father & our Lord Jesus Christ be & abide with you all & [—]tly[2] save you Eternally in his kingdom through the Infinite atonement which is in Jesus Christ Amen—Behold I am Oliver[.] I am an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God the Father & the Lord Jesus Christ[.] Behold I have written the things which he hath commanded me for behold his word was unto me as a burning fire shut up in my bones & I was weary with forbearing & I could forbear no longer Amen [cf. Jer. 20:9]—

Written in the year of our Lord & Saviour 1829—A true Copy of the articles of the Church of Christ[.] O[liver]. C[owdery].[3]

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1. Text partly damaged. Words in brackets are my conjectural emendations.

2. Text partly damaged.

3. While Robert Woodford also transcribed this as "O[liver]. C[owdery]." (1974, 1:290), Scott Faulring, who carefully compared the handwriting on the original, has recently concluded that Cowdery intended "&c" (personal communication).

5.
OLIVER COWDERY INTERVIEW WITH JOSIAH JONES, 1830

Josiah Jones, "History of the Mormonites," *The Evangelist* 9 (1 June 1841): 134-35.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Josiah Jones, a former member of Sidney Rigdon's congregation who did not join the Mormons, was one of the founders of Kirtland, Ohio, and a school teacher (*History of Geauga and Lake Counties,* 1878, 246, 247). Jones is listed in the 1820 census of Kirtland, Geauga County, Ohio, between twenty-six and forty-five (1820:106). His location during the 1830 enumeration remains unknown, although the present letter is dated "Kirtland, 1831." Written in 1831, probably before October (see n. 6 below), Jones's letter was not published in the *Evangelist,* a Disciple of Christ publication edited by Walter Scott, until June 1841. He was evidently acquainted with Philastus Hurlbut and his subsequent efforts in the Palmyra/Manchester area to gather disparaging information about Joseph Smith (see Josiah Jones to Philastus Hurlbut, *Wayne Sentinel,* 6 December 1833). The letter below relates the content of an interview Jones had with Oliver Cowdery, apparently in November 1830.

Kirtland, 1831

Feeling it to be a duty I owe to myself and to the community to take some notice of the transactions of that sect of men known by the name of the Mormons, which has lately sprung up here and in the vicinity, I shall from time to time (living in their midst) commit to writing whatever I already know, and may in future hear about them, in order that the world may know of their rise and their proceedings. What I shall write of their proceedings from the commencement of them until this time, must be mostly from recollection; hereafter, however, it is my intention to note down some things in the form of a diary.

In the last part of October, 1830, four men appeared here by the names

of [Oliver] Cowdery, [Parley P.] Pratt,[1] [Peter] Whitmer[2] and [Ziba] Peterson[3]; they stated they were from Palmyra [Manchester], Ontario county, N.Y.[4] with a book, which they said contained what was engraven on gold plates found in a stone box, in the ground in the town of Manchester, Ontario Co., N.Y., and was found about three years ago by a man named Joseph Smith Jr. who had translated it by looking into a stone or two stones, when put into a dark place, which stones he said were found in the box with the plates. They affirmed while he looked through the stone spectacles another sat by and wrote what he told them, and thus the book was all written. The doctrines which they taught are contained in the book which the world may have recourse to. These men appeared in the town of Mentor at Elder Sidney Rigdon's[5] on Thursday evening about the 6th of October last.[6] On Sunday following the Elder with two or three of these men attended a meeting at Euclid, I also attended and here I was first informed by I[saac]. Morley[7] that such men and such a book had appeared. The next Wednesday evening they held a meeting at the Methodist Meetinghouse in this place, at which time they read some in their new book, and exhorted the people to repent of their pride and priestcraft and all other sins, and be baptized by them for the remission of them, for they said that if they had been baptized it was of no avail, for there was no legal administrator, neither had been for fourteen

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1. On Parley P. Pratt (1807-57), see introduction to III.K.16, PARLEY P. PRATT AUTOBIOGRAPHY (PART I), CIRCA 1854.

2. On Peter Whitmer, Jr. (1809-36), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 63.

3. On Ziba Peterson (?-1849), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 103.

4. Their mission originated in Manchester (see III.L.22, MISSIONARIES COVENANT, 17 OCT 1830).

5. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

6. Jones's chronology is confusing. He begins by stating that the Mormon missionaries appeared in the vicinity in "the last part of October, 1830," which is consistent with other contemporary accounts, but then in the same paragraph says that the Mormons "appeared in the town of Mentor at Elder Sidney Rigdon's on Thursday evening about the 6th of October last." However, Thursday was 7 October, and the first Thursday in November was the 4th (see also n. 8 below).

7. Isaac Morley (1786-1865), a farmer and cooper in the Kirtland area, is said to have been baptized on 15 November 1830 (but possibly earlier, on 5 November). He died in 1865 at Fairview, Sanpete County, Utah (Jessee 1989, 502; L. Cook 1981, 79-80).

hundred years, until God had called them to the office, and had sent them into the world to publish it to this generation. ...

A few days after these men appeared again, a few of us went to see them and Cowdery was requested to state how the plates were found, which he did. He stated that Smith looked onto or through the transparent stones to translate what was on the plates. I then asked him if he had ever looked through the stones to see what he could see in them; his reply was that he was not permitted to look into them. I asked who debarred him from looking into them; he remained sometime in silence, then said that he had so much confidence in his friend Smith, who told him that he must not look into them, that he did not presume to do so lest he should tempt God and be struck dead.

On Monday Elder Rigdon was rebaptized,[8] and additions have continued to be made almost daily to them since that time. Sidney Rigdon said in private conversation that no one could tell what virtue there was in Cowdery's hands, for when he took hold of him to baptize him he felt a shock strike through him. They pretend to give the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands; many of them receive it so that it makes them fall prostrate to the ground; some do not receive the spirit until a number of days after the laying on of hand[s]; some have not yet received it at all. ...

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8. While 14 or 15 November 1830 are usually cited as the date on which Rigdon was baptized, there is evidence that it occurred sometime between 5 and 12 November 1830. In a letter to the New York Saints, dated 12 November 1830, Kirtland, Ohio, Oliver Cowdery related the following: "seventeen went forward and were baptized, between eleven and twelve at night, and on the 6th there was one more, on the 7th nine in the daytime and at night nineteen, on the 8th three, on the 9th three, on the 10th at night one, on the 11th one, on this day another, making in the whole fifty five, among whom are brother Sidney Rigdon and wife" (Copy of letter in Newel Knight Journal, circa 1846, in private possession). If Jones is correct in assigning Rigdon's baptism to a Monday (which is supported in the *Painesville Telegraph,* 15 February 1831), then 8 November 1830 is likely the date of Rigdon's baptism.

6.
OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, 7 SEPTEMBER 1834

Oliver Cowdery to W. W. Phelps, 7 September 1834, [Letter I], *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* 1 (October 1834): 13-16.

EDITORIAL NOTE

William Wines Phelps (1792-1872) was born at Hanover, Morris County, New Jersey. He married Sally Waterman in 1815. For several years Phelps edited the *Ontario Phoenix* (1828-31), an anti-Masonic paper published at Canandaigua, New York. Phelps exhibited an early interest in Mormonism, reportedly selling copies of the Book of Mormon from the office of the *Phoenix* in the spring of 1830 (see *Ontario Phoenix* 3 [29 December 1830]: [2]). He met Joseph Smith on 24 December 1830, perhaps in Canandaigua (see III.I.9, W. W. PHELPS TO OLIVER COWDERY, 21 FEB 1835). On 30 April 1831 Phelps was imprisoned in the Lyons jail for debt (ibid.). After his release, Phelps went to Kirtland, Ohio, where he was baptized in June 1831. He immediately went to Independence, Missouri, and began editing the first Mormon periodical, *The Evening and The Morning Star.* In 1834 he was appointed a counselor to David Whitmer in the Missouri church presidency. Phelps left the church in 1838, but he returned in 1840 and moved to Utah in 1849. He died at Salt Lake City (Jenson 1971, 3:692-97; L. Cook 1981, 87-88; Jessee 1989, 505).

After the printing press of the *Star* was destroyed by a Missouri mob in July 1833, Cowdery edited the *Star* in Kirtland. He then began publishing the *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* in Kirtland, Ohio, in October 1834. A feature of the new periodical was a series of eight letters written by Oliver Cowdery to Phelps and the Missouri church relating the early history of Joseph Smith and the founding of the church. Cowdery's letters, as Dean C. Jessee notes, "were written in the romantic style of nineteenth-century history" (Jessee 1989, 15). In a preface to his first letter to Phelps, Cowdery acknowledged Joseph Smith's participation in the project:

> The following communication was designed to have been published in the last No. of the Star; but owing to a press of other matter it was laid

over for this No. of the Messenger and Advocate. Since it was written, upon further reflection, we have thought that a full history of the rise of the church of the Latter Day Saints, and the most interesting parts of its progress, to the present time, would be worthy the perusal of the Saints.—If circumstances admit, an article on this subject will appear in each subsequent No. of the Messenger and Advocate, until the time when the church was driven from Jackson Co. Mo. by a lawless banditti; & such other remarks as may be thought appropriate and interesting.

That our narrative may be correct, and particularly the introduction, it is proper to inform our patrons, that our brother J[oseph]. SMITH jr. has offered to assist us. Indeed, there are many items connected with the fore part of this subject that render his labor indispensible. With his labor and with authentic documents now in our possession, we hope to render this a pleasing and agreeable narrative, well worth the examination and perusal of the Saints.—To do justice to this subject will require time and space: we therefore ask the forbearance of our readers, assuring them that it shall be founded upon facts.

The publication of Cowdery's first letter in the October 1834 *Messenger and Advocate* evoked a letter from Joseph Smith, published in the same paper in December 1834 (see I.A.10, JOSEPH SMITH TO OLIVER COWDERY, DEC 1834). Smith's statement that he "learned from the first No. of the Messenger and Advocate" of Cowdery's plan to publish a history of the church seems to indicate that Smith was not directly consulted about the facts of the first letter. Or perhaps Smith was unaware how far Cowdery wanted to go with his account.

The publication of Cowdery's history was concurrent with Philastus Hurlbut's anti-Mormon lectures in Kirtland, Ohio, and subsequent publication of E. D. Howe's *Mormonism Unvailed* (Painesville, Ohio: E. D. Howe, 1834), which contained affidavits Hurlbut had collected in New York maligning the character of the Smiths. In his third letter to Phelps, Cowdery commented: "Upon the propriety, then, of a narrative of this kind, I have briefly to remark: It is known to you, that this church has suffered reproach and persecution, from a majority of mankind who have heard but rumor, since its first organization. ... Upon this unfair and unsaint like manner of procedure they have been giving in large *sheets* their own opinions of the incorrectness of our system, and *attested* volumes of our lives and characters. Since, then, our opposers have been thus kind to introduce our cause before the public, it is no more than just that a correct account should be given" (III.G.7, OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, DEC 1834, 41-42).

In 1835 Cowdery's eight letters to Phelps were copied into Joseph Smith's "large journal" by Frederick G. Williams and Warren Parrish (Jessee 1989, 15-17, 27-95). These letters received wide circulation during Smith's lifetime, being published in the *Times and Seasons* (Nauvoo, Illinois), in the *Gospel Reflector* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), in the *Prophet* (New York, New York), and as a pamphlet in 1844 (Liverpool, England). For Phelps's response to Cowdery's first letter, see III.I.8, W. W. PHELPS TO OLIVER COWDERY, 25 DEC 1834.

Norton, Medina co. Ohio, Sabbath evening, September 7, 1834.

DEAR BROTHER,—

Before leaving home, I promised, if I tarried long, to write; and while a few moments are now allowed me for reflection, aside from the cares and common conversation of my friends in this place, I have thought that were I to communicate them to you, might, perhaps, if they should not prove *especially* beneficial to yourself, by confirming you in the faith of the [p. 13] gospel, at least be interesting, since it has pleased our heavenly Father to call us both to rejoice in the same hope of eternal life. And by giving them publicity, some thousands who have embraced the same covenant, may learn something more particular upon the rise of this church, in this last time. ...

On Friday, the 5th, in company with our brother JOSEPH SMITH jr. I left Kirtland for this place (New Portage,) to attend the conference previously appointed.[1] To be permitted, once more, to travel with this brother, occasions reflections of no ordinary kind. Many have been the fateagues and privations which have fallen to my lot to endure, for the gospel's sake, since 1828,[2] with this brother. Our road has frequently been spread with the "fowler's snare," and our persons sought with the eagerness, of the Savage's ferocity, for innocent blood, by men, either heated to desperation by the insinuations of those who professed to be "guides and way-marks" to the kingdom of glory, or the individuals themselves!—This, I confess, is a dark picture to spread before our patrons, but they will pardon my plainness when I assure them of the truth. In fact, God has so ordered, that the reflections which I am permitted to cast upon my past life, relative to a knowledge of the way of salvation, are rendered "doubly endearing."

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1. This conference was held on 8 September 1834 (see J. Smith 1948, 2:162-64).

2. This is an obvious error since Cowdery later states that he first met Joseph Smith on 5 April 1829 (p. 14).

Not only have I been graciously preserved from wicked and unreasonable men, with this our brother, but I have seen the fruit of perseverance in proclaiming the everlasting gospel, immediately after it was declared to the world in these last days, in a manner not to be forgotten while heaven gives my common intellect. And what serves to render the reflection past expression on this point is, that from *his* hand I received baptism, by the direction of the angel of God—the first received into this church, in this day.

Near the time of the setting of the Sun, Sabbath evening, April 5th, 1829,[3] my natural eyes, for the first time beheld this brother. He then resided in Harmony, Susquehanna county Penn. On Monday the 6th, I assisted him in arranging some business of a temporal nature,[4] and on Tuesday the 7th, commenced to write the book of Mormon. These were days never to be forgotten—to sit under the sound of a voice dictated by the *inspiration* of heaven, awakened the utmost gratitude of this bosom! Day after day I continued, uninterrupted, to write from his mouth, as he translated, with the *Urim* and *Thummim,* or, as the Nephites whould [would] have said, "Interpreters," the history, or record, called "The book of Mormon."[5] [p. 14]

To notice, in even few words, the interesting account given by Mormon, and his faithful son Moroni, of a people once beloved and favored of heaven, would supercede my present design: I shall therefore defer this to a future period, and as I said in the introduction, pass more directly to some few incidents immediately connected with the rise of this church, which may be entertaining to some thousands who have stepped forward, amid the frowns of bigots and the calumny of hypocrites, and embraced the gospel of Christ.

No men in their sober senses, could translate and write the directions given to the Nephites, from the mouth of the Savior, of the precise manner in which men should build up his church [3 Ne. 11-28], and especially, when corruption had spread an uncertainty over all forms and systems practiced among men, without desiring a privilege of showing the willingness of the heart by being buried in the liquid grave, to answer a "good conscience by the resurrection of Jesus Christ [1 Pet. 3:21]."

After writing the account given of the Savior's ministry to the remnant

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3. See I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 13.

4. See V.E.5, JOSEPH SMITH HARMONY (PA) LAND RECORDS, 1828-1833.

5. It is generally believed that Smith used only the seer stone after Harris lost the translation manuscript (see Lancaster 1990, 97-112).

of the seed of Jacob, upon this continent, it was easily to be seen, as the prophet said would be, that darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the minds of the people [Isa. 60:2]. On reflecting further, it was as easily to be seen, that amid the great strife and noise concerning religion, none had authority from God to administer the ordinances of the gospel. For, the question might be asked, have men authority to administer in the name of Christ, who deny revelations? when *his* testimony is no less than the spirit of prophecy [Rev. 19:10]? and his religion based, built, and sustained by immediate revelations in all ages of the world, when he has had a people on earth? If these facts were buried, and carefully concealed by men whose craft would have been in danger, if once permitted to shine in the faces of men, they were no longer to us; and we only waited for the commandment to be given, "Arise and be baptized."

This was not long desired before it was realized. The Lord, who is rich in mercy, and ever willing to answer the consistent prayer of the humble, after we had called upon him in a fervent manner, aside from the abodes of men, condescended to manifest to us his will. On a sudden, as from the midst of eternity, the voice of the Redeemer spake peace to us, while the vail was parted and the angel of God came down clothed with glory, and delivered the anxiously looked for message, and the keys of the gospel of repentance!—What joy! what wonder! what amazement! While the world were racked and distracted—while millions were grouping as the blind for the wall, and while all men were resting upon uncertainty, as a general mass, our eyes beheld—our ears heard. As in the "blaze of day;" yes, more—above the glitter of the May[6] Sun beam, which then shed its brilliancy over the face of nature! Then his voice, though mild, pierced to the center, and his words, "I am thy fellow servant," dispelled every fear. We listened—we gazed—we admired! 'Twas the voice of the angel from glory—'twas a message from the Most High! and as we heard we rejoiced, while his love enkindled upon our souls, and we were rapt in the vision of the Almighty! Where was room for doubt? No where: uncertainty had fled, doubt had sunk, no more to rise, while fiction and deception had fled forever!

But, dear brother think, further think for a moment, what joy filled our hearts and with what surprise we must have bowed, (for who would not have bowed [p. 15] the knee for such a blessing?) when we received under

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6. Both Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery subsequently said the event occurred on 15 May 1829 (see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 18; and III.G.12, OLIVER COWDERY STATEMENTS, SEP & OCT 1835).

his hand the holy priesthood, as he said, "upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer this priesthood and this authority, which shall remain upon earth, that the sons of Levi may yet offer an offering unto the Lord in righteousness!"[7]

I shall not attempt to paint to you the feelings of this heart, nor the majestic beauty and glory which surrounded us on this occasion; but you will believe me when I say, that earth, nor men, with the eloquence of time, cannot begin to clothe language in as interesting and sublime a manner as this holy personage. No; nor has this earth power to give the joy, to bestow the peace, or comprehend the wisdom which was contained in each sentence as they were delivered by the power of the Holy Spirit! Man may deceive his fellow man; deception may follow deception, and the children of the wicked one may have power to seduce the foolish and untaught, till nought but fiction feeds the many, and the fruit of falsehood carries in its current the giddy to the grave; but one touch with the finger of his love, yes, one ray of glory from the upper world, or one word from the mouth of the Savior, from the bosom of eternity, strikes it *all* into insignificance, and blots it forever from the mind! The assurance that we were in the presence of an angel; the certainty that we heard the voice of Jesus, and the truth unsullied as it flowed from a pure personage, dictated by the will of God, is to me, past description, and I shall ever look upon this expression of the Savior's goodness with wonder and thanksgiving while I am permitted to tarry, and in those mansions where perfection dwells and sin never comes, I hope to adore in that DAY which shall never cease![8] ...

I must close for the present. ...

O. COWDERY.

To W. W. Phelps, Esq. ...

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7. See Joseph Smith's version of this event in I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 17-18, which adds the phrase "priesthood of Aaron" (see also Vogel 1988, chap. 5).

8. Cowdery's footnote reads: "I will hereafter give you a full history of the rise of this church, up to the time stated in my introduction; which will necessarily embrace the life and character of this brother [Joseph Smith]. I shall therefore leave the history of baptism, &c. till its proper place."

7.
OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, DECEMBER 1834

Oliver Cowdery to W. W. Phelps, December 1834, "Letter III," *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* 1 (December 1834): 41-43.

EDITORIAL NOTE

In his third letter to W. W. Phelps,[1] Cowdery resumed his account of Joseph Smith's early life by describing the revival of religion that occurred in Palmyra in the early 1820s and its impact on the Smith family. For Phelps's response to the present letter, see III.I.9, W. W. PHELPS TO OLIVER COWDERY, 21 FEB 1835.

To W. W. Phelps, Esq.

DEAR BROTHER:—

After a silence of another month, agreeably to my promise, I proceed upon the subject I proposed in the first No. of the Advocate.[2] Perhaps an apology for brevity may not be improper, here, as many important incidents consequently transpiring in the organization and establishing of a society like the one whose history I am about to give to the world, are overlooked or lost, and soon buried with those who were the actors, will prevent my giving those minute and particular reflections which I have so often wished might have characterized the "Acts of the apostles," and the ancient saints. But such facts as are within my knowledge, will be given, without any reference to inconsistencies, in the minds of others, or impossibilities, in the feelings of such as do not give credence to the system of salvation and redemption so clearly set forth and so plainly written over the face of the sacred scriptures:

Upon the propriety, then, of a narrative of this kind, I have briefly to

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1. Cowdery's second letter to Phelps deals with the apostasy of the early Christian church and contains no information about Joseph Smith's early life; it is therefore excluded from this compilation (see *Messenger and Advocate* 1 [November 1834]: 27-32).

2. See III.G.6, OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, 7 SEP 1834.

remark: It is known to you, that this church has suffered reproach and persecution, from a majority of mankind who have heard but a rumor, since its first organization. And further, you are also conversant with the fact, that no sooner had the messengers of the fulness of the gospel, began to proclaim its, heavenly precepts, and call upon men to embrace the same, than they were vilified and slandered by thousands [p. 41] who never saw their faces, and much less knew aught derogatory of their characters, moral or religious—Upon this unfair and unsaint like manner of procedure they have been giving in large *sheets* their own opinions of the incorrectness of our system, and *attested* volumes of our lives and characters.

Since, then, our opposers have been thus kind to introduce our cause before the public, it is no more than just that a correct account should be given; and since they have invariably sought to cast a shade over the truth, and hinder its influence from gaining ascendency, it is also proper that it should be vindicated, by laying before the world a correct statement of events as they have transpired from time to time.

Whether I shall succeed so far in my purpose as to convince the public of the incorrectness of those scurulous reports which have *inundated* our land, or even but a small portion of them, will be better ascertained when I close than when I commence; and I am content to submit it before the candid for perusal, & before the Judge of all for inspection, as I most assuredly believe that before HIM I must stand and answer for the deeds transacted in this life.

Should I, however, be instrumental in causing a *few* to hear before they judge, and understand both sides of this matter before they condemn, I shall have the satisfaction of seeing them embrace it, as I am certain that one is the inevitable fruit of the other. But to proceed:

You will recollect that I informed you, in my letter published in the first No. of the Messenger and Advocate, that this history would necessarily embrace the life and character of our esteemed friend and brother, j. SMITH Jr. one of the presidents of this church, and for information on that part of the subject, I refer you to his communication of the same, published in this paper.[3] I shall, therefore, pass over that, till I come to the 15th year of his life.[4]

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3. See I.A.10, JOSEPH SMITH TO OLIVER COWDERY, DEC 1834.

4. In the next letter, Cowdery corrects Smith's age to seventeen (see III.G.8, OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, FEB 1835, 78). However, 1823 is still incorrect for the historical events described in this letter,

It is necessary to premise this account by relating the situation of the public mind relative to religion, at this time: One Mr. Lane,[5] a presiding Elder of the Methodist church, visited Palmyra, and vicinity. Elder Lane was a tallented man possessing a good share of literary endowments, and apparent humility. There was a great awakening,[6] or excitement raised on the subject of religion, and much enquiry for the word of life. Large additions were made to the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist churches.—Mr. Lane's manner of communication was peculiarly calculated to awaken the intellect of the hearer, and arouse the sinner to look about him for safety—much good instruction was always drawn from his discourses on the scriptures, and in common with others, our brother's mind became awakened.

For a length of time the reformation seemed to move in a harmonious manner, but, as the *excitement* ceased, or those who had expressed anxieties, had professed a belief in the pardoning influence and condescension of the Savior, a general struggle was made by the leading characters of the different sects, for proselytes. Then strife seemed to take the place of that apparent union and harmony which had previously characterized the moves and exhortations of the old professors, and a cry—I am right—you are wrong—was introduced in their stead.

In this general strife for followers, his mother, one sister, and two of his natural brothers, were persuaded to unite with the Presbyterians.[7] This gave opportunity for further reflection; and as will be seen in the sequel, laid a foundation, or was one means of lay[p. 42]ing a foundation for the attestation of the truths, or professions of truth, contained in that record called the word of God.

After strong solicitations to unite with one of those different societies, and seeing the apparent proselyting disposition manifested with equal warmth

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particularly the revival, which occurred in 1824-25 (see nn. 5, 6, and 7 below).

5. George Lane (1784-1859) was appointed to preside over the Ontario District, which included Palmyra and Manchester, in July 1824 (see I.D.4, WILLIAM SMITH, *ON MORMONISM,* 1883, n. 5).

6. This revival took place in Palmyra in the winter of 1824-25 (see Walters 1969a; Walters 1969b; and M. Hill 1982; Marquardt and Walters 1994, 15-41).

7. Presbyterian church records are incomplete, so it is impossible to determine the exact date that Lucy, Sophronia, Hyrum, and Samuel joined. Lucy said she joined following Alvin's death, which occurred on 19 November 1823, so her membership likely dates to the revival of 1824-25 (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, MS:48-50; see also M. Hill 1982).

from each, his mind was led to more seriously contemplate the importance of a move of this kind. To profess godliness without its benign influence upon the heart, was a thing so foreign from his feelings, that his spirit was not at rest day nor night. To unite with a society professing to be built upon the only sure foundation, and that profession be a vain one, was calculated, in its very nature, the more it was contemplated, the more to arouse the mind to the serious consequences of moving hastily, in a course fraught with eternal realities. To say he was right, and still be wrong, could not profit; and amid so many, some must be built upon the sand.

In this situation where could he go? If he went to one he was told they were right, and all others were wrong—If to another, the same was heard from those: All professed to be the true church; and if not they were certainly hypocritical, because, if I am presented with a system of religion, and enquire of my teacher whether it is correct, and he informs me that he is not certain, he acknowledges at once that he is teaching without authority, and acting without a commission!

If one professed a degree of authority or preference in consequence of age or right, and that superiority was without evidence, it was insufficient to convince a mind once aroused to that degree of determination which at that time operated upon him. And upon farther reflecting, that the Savior had said that the gate was straight and the way narrow that lead to life eternal, and that few entered there; and that the way was broad, and the gate wide which lead to destruction, and that many crowded its current [Matt. 7:13-14], a proof from some source was wanting to settle the mind and give peace to the agitated bosom. It is not frequent that the *minds* of men are exercised with propper determination relative to obtaining a certainty of the things of God.—They are too apt to rest short of that *assurance* which the Lord Jesus has so freely offered in his word to man, and which so beautifully characterizes his whole plan of salvation, as revealed to us.

[OLIVER COWDERY.]

8.
OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, FEBRUARY 1835

Oliver Cowdery to W. W. Phelps, February 1835, "Letter IV," *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* 1 (February 1835): 77-80.

EDITORIAL NOTE

In his fourth letter to W. W. Phelps, Cowdery gives details about the visit of the angel "Moroni" to Joseph Smith on the night of 21/22 September 1823. In a letter to Cowdery, dated 25 December 1834, Phelps requested Cowdery to "explain, or state what the angel said when he informed brother J[oseph]. S[mith]. jr. that a *treasure* was about to come forth to this generation" (see III.I.8, W. W. PHELPS TO OLIVER COWDERY, 25 DEC 1834). In the present letter, Cowdery tries to fulfill Phelps's request. Smith's collaboration is indicated by Cowdery's statement "... to use his [Smith's] own description ..."

To W. W. Phelps, Esq.

DEAR BROTHER:—

In my last, published in the 3d No. of the Advocate[1] I apologized for the brief manner in which I should be obliged to give, in many instances, the history of this church. Since then yours of C[h]ristmas has been received.[2] It was not my [p. 77] wish to be understood that I could not give the leading items of every important occurrence, at least so far as would effect my duty to my fellowmen, in such as contained important information upon the subject of doctrine, and as would render it intelligibly plain; but as there are, in a great house, many vessels, so in the history of a work of this magnitude, many items which would be interesting to those who follow, are forgotten. In fact, I deem every manifestation of the Holy Spirit, dictating the hearts of the saints in the way of righteousness, to be of importance, and this is one

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1. See III.G.7, OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, DEC 1834.

2. See III.I.8, W. W. PHELPS TO OLIVER COWDERY, 25 DEC 1834.

reason why I plead an apology.

You will recollect that I mentioned the time of a religious excitement, in Palmyra and vicinity to have been in the 15th year of our brother J. Smith Jr's, age—that was an error in the type—it should have been in the 17th.—You will please remember this correction, as it will be necessary for the full understanding of what will follow in time. This would bring the date down to the year 1823.

I do not deem it to be necessary to write further on the subject of this excitement. It is doubted by many whether any real or essential good ever resulted from such excitements, while others advocate their propriety with warmth.

The mind is easily called up to reflection upon a matter of such deep importance, and it is just that it should be; but there is a regret occupying the heart when we consider the deep anxiety of thousands, who are lead away with a vain imagination, or a groundless hope, no better than the idle wind or the spider's web.

But if others were not benefited, our brother was urged forward and strengthened in the determination to know for himself of the certainty and reality of pure and holy religion.—And it is only necessary for me to say, that while this excitement continued, he continued to call upon the Lord in secret for a full manifestation of divine approbation, and for, to him, the all important information, if a Supreme being did exist, to have an assurance that he was accepted of him. This, most assuredly, was correct—it was right. The Lord has said, long since, and his word remains steadfast, that to him who knocks it shall be opened [Matt. 7:7], & whosoever will, may come and partake of the waters of life freely.

To deny a humble penitent sinner a refreshing draught from this most pure of all fountains, and most desirable of all refreshments, to a thirsty soul, is a matter for the full performance of which the sacred record stands pledged. The Lord never said—"Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest [Matt. 11:28]," to turn a deaf ear to those who were weary, when they call upon him. He never said, by the mouth of the prophet—"Ho, every one that thirsts, come ye to the waters," without passing it as a firm decree, at the same time, that he that should after come, should be filled with a joy unspeakable. Neither did he manifest by the Spirit to John upon the isle—"Let him that is athirst, come," and command him to send the same abroad, under any other consideration, than that "whosoever would, might take the water of life freely [Rev. 21:6]," to the remotest ages of time, or while there was a sinner upon his footstool.

These sacred and important promises are looked upon in our day as

being given, either to another people, or in a figuratively form, and consequently require *spiritualizing,* notwithstanding they are as conspicuously plain, and are meant to be understood according to their *literal* reading, as those passages which teach us of the creation of the world, and of the decree of its Maker to bring its inhabitants to judgment. But to proceed with my narrative.—

On the evening of the 21st of September, 1823, previous to retiring to rest, our brother's mind was unusually wrought up on the subject which had so long agitated his mind—his heart was drawn out in fervent prayer, and his whole soul was so lost to every thing of a temporal nature, that earth, to him, had lost its claims, and all he desired was to be prepared in heart to commune with some kind messenger who could communicate to him the desired information of his acceptance with God.

At length the family retired, and he, as usual, bent his way, though in silence, where others might have rested their weary frames "locked fast in sleep's embrace;" but repose had fled, [p. 78] and accustomed slumber had spread her refreshing hand over others beside him—he continued still to pray—his heart, though once hard and obdurate, was softened, and that mind which had often fitted, like the "wild bird of passage," had settled upon a determined basis not to be decoyed or driven from its purpose.

In this situation hours passed unnumbered—how many or how few I know not, neither is he able to inform me; but suppose it must have been eleven or twelve, and perhaps later, as the noise and bustle of the family, in retiring, had long since ceased.—While continuing in prayer for a manifestation in some way that his sins were forgiven; endeavoring to exercise faith in the scriptures, on a sudden a light like that of day, only of a purer and far more glorious appearance and brightness, burst into the room.—Indeed, to use his own description, the first sight was as though the house was filled with consuming and unquenchable fire. This sudden appearance of a light so bright, as must naturally be expected, occasioned a shock or sensation, visible to the extremities of the body. It was, however, followed with a calmness and serenity of mind, and an overwhelming rapture of joy that surpassed understanding, and in a moment a personage stood before him.

Notwithstanding the room was previously filled with light above the brightness of the sun, as I have before described, yet there seemed to be an additional glory surrounding or accompanying this personage, which shone with an increased degree of briliancy, of which he was in the midst; and though his countenance was as lightening, yet it was of a pleasing, innocent and glorious appearance, so much so, that every fear was banished from the heart, and nothing but calmness pervaded the soul.

It is no easy task to describe the appearance of a messenger from the skies—indeed, I doubt there being an individual clothed with perishable clay, who is capable to do this work. To be sure, the Lord appeared to his apostles after his resurrection, and we do not learn as they were in the least difficultied to look upon him; but from John's description upon Patmos, we learn that he is there represented as most glorious in appearance; and from other items in the sacred scriptures we have the fact recorded where *angels* appeared and conversed with men, and there was no difficulty on the part of the individuals, to endure their presence; and others where their glory was so conspicuous that they could not endure. The last description or appearance is the one to which I refer, when I say that it is no easy task to describe their glory.

But it may be well to relate the particulars as far as given—The stature of this personage was a little above the common size of men in this age; his garment was perfectly white, and had the appearance of being without seam.

Though fear was banished from his heart, yet his surprise was no less when he heard him declare himself to be a messenger sent by commandment of the Lord, to deliver a special message, and to witness to him that his sins were forgiven, and that his prayers were heard; and that the scriptures might be fulfilled, which say—"God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things w[h]ich are despised, has God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things which are, that no flesh should glory in his presence [1 Cor. 1:27-29]. Therefore, says the Lord, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder; the wisdom, of their wise shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid [Isa. 29:14]; for according to his covenant which he made with his ancient saints, his people, the house of Israel, must come to a knowledge of the gospel, and own that Messiah whom their fathers rejected, and with them the fulness of the Gentiles be gathered in, to rejoice in one fold under one Shepherd [Jn. 10:16]."

"This cannot be brought about until first certain preparatory things are accomplished, for so has the Lord purposed in his own mind. He has therefore chose you as an instrument in his hand to bring to light that which shall perform his act, his strange act [Isa. 28:21], and bring to pass a marvelous work and a wonder [Isa. 29:14]. Wherever the sound shall go it shall cause the ears of men to tingle, and wherever it shall be proclaimed, the pure in heart shall rejoice, [p. 79] while those who draw near to God with their mouths, and honor him with their lips, while their hearts are far from him [Isa. 29:13], will seek its overthrow, and the destruction of those by whose

hands it is carried. Therefore, marvel not if your name is made a derision, and had as a by-word among such, if you are the instrument in bringing it, by the gift of God, to the knowledge of the people."

He then proceeded and gave a general account of the promises made to the fathers, and also gave a history of the aborigines of this country, and said they were literal descendants of Abraham. He represented them as once being an enlightened and intelligent people, possessing a correct knowledge of the gospel, and the plan of restoration and redemption. He said this history was written and deposited not far from that place, and that it was our brother's privilege, if obedient to the commandments of the Lord, to obtain, and translate the same by the means of the Urim and Thummim, which were deposited for that purpose with the record.

"Yet," said he, "the scripture must be fulfilled before it is translated, which says that the words of a book, which were sealed, were presented to the learned [Isa. 29:11]; for thus has God determined to leave men without excuse, and show to the meek that his arm is not shortened that it cannot save."

A part of the book was sealed, and was not to be opened yet. The sealed part, said he, contains the same revelation which was given to John upon the isle of Patmos, and when the people of the Lord are prepared, and found worthy, then it will be unfolded unto them.

On the subject of bringing to light the unsealed part of this record, it may be proper to say, that our brother was expressly informed, that it must be done with an eye single to the glory of God; if this consideration did not wholly characterize all his proceedings in relation to it, the adversary of truth would overcome him, or at least prevent his making that proficiency in this glorious work which he otherwise would.

While describing the place where the record was deposited, he gave a minute relation of it, and the vision of his mind being opened at the same time, he was permitted to view it critically; and previously being acquainted with the place, he was able to follow the direction of the vision, afterward, according to the voice of the angel, and obtain the book.

I close for the present by subscribing myself as ever, your brother in Christ.

OLIVER COWDERY.

9.
OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, MARCH 1835

Oliver Cowdery to W. W. Phelps, March 1835, "Letter V," *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* 1 (March 1835): 95-96.

EDITORIAL NOTE

In his fifth letter to W. W. Phelps, Oliver Cowdery discourses at length about biblical predictions concerning the restoration of Israel in the last days. While not word-for-word, Cowdery's discussion of Old Testament prophecy is derived from the angel's 1823 message to Joseph Smith, stating near the end of his letter, "I will give a further detail of the promises to Israel, hereafter, as revealed by the angel." The subject of Israel's gathering had a particular meaning to Phelps and the Missouri church because Smith's revelations had previously appointed Independence, Missouri, "for the restoration of his [God's] people, as he has spoken by the mouth of his prophets, and for the gathering of his saints to stand upon Mount Zion, which shall be the city of New Jerusalem" (LDS D&C 84:2; cf. 84:1-5; 42:9; 45:66). In his comparatively brief account of his 1823 vision, Smith reviewed only three passages of scripture referred to by the angel (Mal. 3, 4; Isa. 11; Acts 3:22-23), none of which is mentioned by Cowdery, then stated: "He quoted many other passages of scripture and offered many explanations which cannot be mentioned here" (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 5-6).

TO W. W. PHELPS, ESQ.

Dear Brother:

Yours of 6th ult. is received and published in this No.[1] It contains so *many questions,* that I have thought I would let every man answer for himself, as it would occupy a larger space to answer all of them than would be proper to devote at this time. When I look at the world as it is, and view men as they are, I am not much surprised that they oppose the truth as many, perhaps, and indeed, the more I see the less I marvel on this subject. To talk of

1. W. W. Phelps to Oliver Cowdery, 6 February 1835, *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* 1 (March 1835): 81-82.

heavenly communications, angels' visits, and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, *now,* since the apostles have fallen asleep, and men interpret the word of God without the aid of either the Spirit or angels, is a novel thing among the wise, and a piece of blasphemy among the craft-men. But so it is, and it is wisdom that it should be so, because the Holy Spirit does not dwell in unholy temples, nor angels reveal the great work of God to hypocrites.

You will notice in my last, on rehearsing the words of the angel, where he communicated to our brother [Joseph Smith]—that his sins were forgiven, and that he was called of the Lord to bring to light, by the gift of inspiration, this important intelligence, an item like the following—"God has chosen the foolish things of the world, and things which are despised, God has chosen;" &c. This, I conceive to be an important item—Not many mighty and noble, were called in ancient times, because they always *knew so much* that God could not teach them, and a man that would listen to the voice of the Lord and follow the teachings of heaven, always was despised, and considered to be of the foolish class—Paul proves this fact, when he says, "We are made as the filth of the world—the off-scouring of all things unto this day [1 Cor. 4:13]."

I am aware, that a rehearsal of visions of angels at this day, is as inconsistent with a portion of mankind as it formerly was, after all the boast of this wise generation in the knowledge of the truth; but there is a uniformity so complete, that on the reflection, one is led to rejoice that it is so.

In my last I gave an imperfect description of the angel,[2] and was obliged to do so, for the reason, that my pen would fail to describe an angel in his glory, or, the glory of God. I also gave a few sentences which he uttered on the subject of the gathering of Israel, &c. Since writing the former, I have thought it would, perhaps, be interesting to give something more full on this important subject, as well as a revelation of the gospel. That these holy personages should feel a deep interest in the accomplishment of the glorious purposes of the Lord, in his work in the last days, is consistent, when we view critically what is recorded of their sayings in the holy Scriptures.

You will remember to have read in Daniel—"And at that time, [the last days][3] shall Michael stand up, the great prince, who stands for the children of thy people [12:1];" and also in Revelations—"I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets." Please compare these sayings with that singular expression in Heb[rews]. "Are they [angels][4] not all ministering

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2. See III.G.8, OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, FEB 1835, 79.

3. Brackets in original.

4. Brackets in original.

Spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? [1:14]" And then let me ask nine questions: first,

Are the angels now in glory, the former prophets and servants of God? Secondly: Are they brethren of those who keep his commandments on earth? and thirdly, have brethren & fleshly kindred, in the kingdom of God, feelings of respect and condescension enough to speak to each other, though one may be in heaven and the other on the earth?

Fourthly: If angels are ministering spirits, sent [p. 95] forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation, will they not minister for those heirs? and fifthly, if they do, will any one know it?

Sixthly: Will Michael, the archangel, the great prince, stand up in the last days for Israel? Seventhly: will he defend them from their enemies? Eightly: will he lead them, as they were once lead; and ninthly, if so, will he be seen? These questions I leave without answering, because the reasoning is so plain, and so many might be brought, that, they must be at hand in the heart and mind of every saint. But to the gospel, and then to the gathering.[5]

The great plan of redemption being prepared before the fall of man, and the salvation of the human family being as precious in the sight of the Lord at one time as at another, before the Messiah came in the flesh and was crucified, as after the gospel was preached, and many were found obedient to the same. This gospel being the same from the beginning, its ordinances were also unchangeable. Men were commanded to repent and be baptized by water in the name of the Lord: and were then blessed with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit being thus given; men were enabled to look forward to the time of the coming of the Son of Man, and to rejoice in that day, because through that sacrifice they looked for a remission of their sins, and for their redemption.

Had it not been for this plan of salvation, which God devised before the fall, man must have remained miserable forever, after transgressing the first commandment, because in consequence of that transgression he had rendered himself unworthy the presence of his Maker. He being therefore cast out, the gospel was preached, and this hope of eternal life was set before him, by the ministering of angels who delivered it as they were commanded.

Not only did the ancients look forward to the time of the coming of the Messiah in the flesh, with delight, but there was another day for which they sought and for which they prayed. Knowing, as they did, that the fall had brought upon them death, and that man was sensual and evil, they longed

5. Cowdery's rhetorical questions were designed to justify the ministering of angels in the last days.

for a day when the earth might again rest, and appear as in the beginning—when evil might be unknown upon its face, and all creation enjoy one undisturbed peace for a thousand years.

This being sought for in faith, it pleased the Lord to covenant with them to roll on his purposes until he should bring it to pass—and though many generations were to be gathered to their fathers, yet the righteous, those who should, in their lives, embrace the gospel, and live obedient to its requirements, rise and inherit it during this reign of peace.

From time to time the faithful servants of the Lord have endeavored to raise up a people who should be found worthy to inherit this rest, (for it was called the rest of the righteous or the day of the Lord's rest, prepared for the righteous;) but were not able to sanctify them that they could endure the presence of the Lord, excepting Enoch, who, with his people, for their righteousness, were taken into heaven, with a promise that they should yet see that day when the whole earth should be covered with glory.

Moses labored diligently to effect this object, but in consequence of the transgressions and rebellions of the children of Israel, God swore in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest; and in consequence of this decree, and their transgressions since, they have been scattered to the four winds, and are thus to remain till the Lord gathers them in by his own power.

To a remnant of them the gospel was preached by the Messiah in person, but they rejected his voice, though it was raised daily among them. The apostles continued to hold forth the same; after the crucifixion & resurrection of the Lord Jesus, until they would hear it no longer; and then they were commanded to turn to the Gentiles.

They however labored faithfully to turn that people from error; that they might be the happy partakers of mercy, and save themselves from the impending storm that hung over them. They were commanded to preach Jesus Christ night and day—to preach through him the resurrection from the dead—to declare that all who would embrace the gospel, repent, and be baptized for the remission of their sins, should be saved—to declare that this was the only sure foundation on which they could build and be safe—that God had again visited his people in consequence of his covenant with their fathers, and that if they would they might be the first who should receive these glad tidings, and have the unspeakable joy of carrying the same to all people; for before the day of rest comes, it must go to all nations, kindreds and tongues.

But in consequence of their rejecting the gospel, the Lord suffered them to be again scattered; their land to be wasted and their beautiful city to be trodden down of the Gentiles, until their time should be fulfilled.

In the last days, to fulfill the promises to the ancient prophets, when the Lord is to pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, he has determined to bring to light his gospel, to the Gentiles, that it may go to the house of Israel. This gospel has been perverted and men have wandered in darkness. That commission given to the apostles at Jerusalem, so easy to be understood, has been hid from the world, because of evil, and the honest have been lead by the designing, till there are none to be found who are practising the ordinances of the gospel, as they were anciently delivered.

But the time has now arrived, in which, according to his covenants, the Lord will manifest to the faithful that he is the same to-day and forever, and that the cup of suffering of his people, the house of Israel, is nearly fulfilled; and that the way may be prepared before their face he will bring to the knowledge of the people the gospel as it was preached by his servants on this land, and manifest to the obedient the truth of the same, by the power of the Holy Spirit; for the time is near when his sons and daughters will prophesy, old men dream dreams, and young men see visions, and those who are favored will be such as embrace the gospel as it was delivered in old times; and they shall be blessed with signs following.

Farther on the subject of the gathering of Israel.—This was perfectly understood by all the ancient prophets. Moses prophesied of the affliction which should come upon that people even after the coming of the Messiah, where he said: and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands [Deut. 31:29]. Connecting this with a prophecy in the song which follows; which was given to Moses in the tabernacle—remembering the expression—"in the latter days"—where the Lord foretel[l]s all their evil, and their being received to mercy, to such as seek the peace of Israel much instruction may be gained. It is as follows:—

"I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend my arrows upon them. They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust. The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling with the man of gray hairs [Deut. 32:23-25]."

But after all this, he will judge their enemies and avenge them of theirs; for he says:

"If I want my glittering sword, and my hand take hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to my enemies, and will reward them that hate me. I will make my arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh [Deut. 32:41-42]."

After all this—after Israel has been restored, and afflicted and his

enemies have also been chastised, the Lord says: "Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land and to his people [Deut. 32:43]."

I will give a further detail of the promises to Israel, hereafter, as rehearsed by the angel.[6] Accept assurance of my esteem as ever.

[OLIVER COWDERY.]

6. See III.G.10, OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, APR 1835.

10.
OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, APRIL 1835

Oliver Cowdery to W. W. Phelps, April 1835, "Letter VI," *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* 1 (April 1835): 108-12.

EDITORIAL NOTE

As promised in his previous letter of March 1835 (III.G.9, OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, MAR 1835), Cowdery continues his account of the angel's words to Joseph Smith on the night of 21/22 September 1823. At the conclusion of his letter, Cowdery identifies the messenger as "the angel Moroni, whose words I have been rehearsing, who communicated the knowledge of the record of the Nephites, in this age ..."

TO W. W. PHELPS, ESQ.

Dear Sir:—

Yours of the 24th February is received and inserted in this No. of the Advocate.[1] When reviewing my letter No. 3,[2] I am lead to conclude, that some expressions contained in it are calculated to call up past scenes, and perhaps, paint them to the mind, in a manner differently than otherwise were it not that you can speak from experience of their correctness.

I have not space you know, to go into every particular item noticed in [p. 108] yours, as that would call my attention too far, or too much, from the great object lying before me,—the history of this church;—but one expression, or quotation contained in your last strikes the mind, (and I may add—the *heart,*) with so much force, that I cannot pass without noticing it: It is a line or two from that little book contained in the Old Testament, called "RUTH." It says: "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will

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1. Cowdery evidently refers to Phelps's letter of 21 February 1835 published in the same issue (see III.I.9, W. W. PHELPS TO OLIVER COWDERY, 21 FEB 1835).

2. See III.G.7, OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, DEC 1834.

lodge, thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God [Ruth 1:16]."

There is a something breathed in this, not known to the world. The great, as many are called, may profess friendship, and covenant to share in each other's toils, for the honors and riches of this life, but it is not like the sacrifice offered by Ruth. She forsook her friends, she left her nation, she longed not for the altars of her former gods, and why? because Israel's God was God indeed? and by joining herself to HIM a reward was offered, and an inheritance promised with him when the earth was sanctified, and peoples, nations and tongues serve him acceptably? And the same covenant of Ruth's, whispers the same assurance in the same promises, and the same knowledge of the same God.

I gave, in my last, a few words, on the subject of a few items, as spoken by the angel at the time the knowledge of the record of the Nephites was communicated to our brother, and in consequence of the subject of the gospel and that of the gathering of Israel's being so connected, I found it difficult to speak of the one without mentioning the other; and this may not be improper, as it is evident, that the Lord has decreed to bring forth the fulness of the gospel in the last days, previous to gathering Jacob, but a preparatory work, and the other is to follow in quick succession.

This being of so much importance, and of so deep interest to the saints, I have thought best to give a farther detail of the heavenly message, and if I do not give it in the precise words, shall strictly confine myself to the facts in substance.

David said, (Ps. C.) ["]make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands, that is, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness: Come before his presence with singing [Ps. 100:1-2].["] This he said in view of the glorious period for which he often prayed, and was anxious to behold, which he knew could not take place until the knowledge of the glory of God covered all lands, or all the earth. Again he says, [Ps. 107][3] ["]O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: For his mercy endureth forever. Let the reedeemed [redeemed] of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from the hand of the enemy; and gathered out of the lands from the east, and from the west; from the north and from the south.—They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out [of] their distresses; and led them in the right way that they might go to the city of habitation [Ps. 107:1-7].["]

Most clearly was it shown to the prophet, that the righteous should be

3. Brackets in original.

gathered from all the earth: He knew that the children of Israel were led from Egypt, by the right hand of the Lord, and permitted to possess the land of Canaan, though they were rebellious in the desert, but he farther knew, that they were not gathered from the east, the west, the north and the south, at that time; for it was clearly manifested that the Lord himself would prepare a habitation, even as he said, when he would lead them to a city of refuge. In that, David saw a promise for the righteous, [see 144 Ps][4] when they should be delivered from those who oppressed them, and from the hand of strange children, or the enemies of the Lord; that their sons should be like plants grown up in their youth, and their daughters like corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a beautiful palace. It is then that the sons and daughters shall prophesy, old men dream dreams, and young men see visions. At that time the garners of the righteous will be full, affording all manner of store. It was while contemplating this time, and viewing this happy state of the righteous, that he further says: ["]The Lord shall reign forever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations—Praise ye the Lord [Ps. 146:10]![”]

Isaiah who was on the earth at the time the ten tribes of Israel were led away captive from the land of Canaan, was shown, not only their calamity and [p. 109] affliction, but the time when they were to be delivered. After reproving them for their corruption and blindness, he prophesies of their dispersion. He says, ["]Your country is desolate, your cities are burnt with fire: Your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is thus made desolate, being overthrown by strangers.["] He further says, while speaking of the iniquity of that people. ["]Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loves gifts, and follows after rewards: They judge not the fatherless, neither does the cause of the widow come unto them. Therefore, says the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of my adversaries, and avenge me of my enemies [Isa. 1:7, 23-24].["] But after this calamity has befallen Israel, and the Lord has poured upon them his afflicting judgments, as he said by the mouth of Moses—["]I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend my arrows upon them.—They shall be afflicted with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the earth [Deut. 32:23-24]["]—he will also fulfill this further prediction uttered by the mouth of Isaiah. ["]I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward you shall be called, the *city of righteousness, the faithful city* [Isa.

4. Brackets in original.

1:25-26]["] Then will be fulfilled, also, the saying of David: ["]And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation [Ps. 107:7].["]

Isaiah continues his prophecy concerning Israel, and tells them what would be done for them in the last days; for thus it is written: ["]The word that Isaiah the son of Amos saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills;—and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.—And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plough shares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nations shall not lift up the sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of his people in Zion, and upon their assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence, or above, shall be a covering and a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain [Isa. 2:1-4, 4:5-6].["] And his people shall dwell safely, they shall possess the land forever, even the land which was promised to their fathers for an everlasting inheritance: for behold, says the Lord by the mouth of the prophet: ["]The day will come that I will sow the house of Israel with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build and to plant, says the Lord [Isa. 31:27-28].["]

For this happy situation and blessed state of Israel, did the prophets look, and obtained a promise, that, though the house of Israel and Judah, should violate the covenant; the Lord, in the last days would make with them a new one: not according to the one which he made with their fathers in the day that he took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; which, said the Lord, ["]my covenant they broke, although I was a husband and a father unto them: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, says the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and will write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people [Jer. 31:32-33].["]

For ["]thus says the Lord, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; and the city shall be builded

upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof. And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving, and the voice of them that make merry:—and I will multiply them and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them and they shall not be small. Their [p. 110] children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them. Their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them [Jer. 30:18-21].["]

["]At the same time, says the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people; I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth [Jer. 31:1, 8]["]; ["]I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, keep not back:—bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth [Isa. 43:6].["] And in those days, and at that time, says the Lord, though Israel and Judah have been driven and scattered, they shall come together, they shall even come weeping [Jer. 50:4]: for with supplications will I lead them [Jer. 31:9]: they shall go and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, and say, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten [Jer. 50:4-5]; and watchmen upon Mount Ephraim shall say, Arise, and let us go up to Zion, unto the holy Mount of the Lord our God [Jer. 31:6]; for he will teach us of his ways, and instruct us to walk in his paths. That the way for this to be fully accomplished, may be prepared, the Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and with his mighty wind shake his hand over the river and smite it in its seven streams, and make men go over dry-shod. And there shall be a high way for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel when they came up out of the land of Egypt [Isa. 11:15-16].

And thus shall Israel come: not a dark corner of the earth shall remain unexplored, nor an island of the seas be left without being visited; for as the Lord has removed them into all corners of the earth, he will cause his mercy to be as abundantly manifested in their gathering as his wrath in their dispersion, until they are gathered according to the covenant. He will, as he said by the prophet, send for many fishers and they shall fish them [Jer. 16:16]; and after send for many hunters, who shall hunt them; not as their enemies have to afflict, but with glad tidings of great joy, with a message of peace, and a call for their return.

And it will come to pass, that though the house of Israel has forsaken the Lord, and bowed down and worshipping other gods, which were no gods, and been cast out before the face of the world, they will know the voice of the Shepherd when he calls upon them this time; for soon his day

of power comes, and in it his people will be willing to harken to his counsel; and even now are they already beginning to be stirred up in their hearts to search for these things, and so are daily reading the ancient prophets, and are marking the times, and seasons of their fulfilment. Thus God is preparing the way for their return.

But it is necessary that you should understand, that what is to be fulfilled in the last days, is not only for the benefit of Israel, but the Gentiles, if they will repent and embrace the gospel, for they are to be remembered also in the same covenant, and are to be fellow heirs with the seed of Abraham, inasmuch as they are so by faith—for God is no respecter of persons. This was shown to Moses, when he wrote—["]Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people [Deut. 32:43]![”]

In consequence of the transgression of the Jews at the coming of the Lord, the Gentiles were called into the kingdom, and for this obedience, are to be favored with the gospel in its fulness first, in the last days; for it is written. The first shall be last, and the last first [Matt. 19:30]. Therefore, when the fulness of the gospel, as was preached by the righteous, upon this land, shall come forth, it shall be declared to the Gentiles first, and whoso will repent shall be delivered, for they shall understand the plan of salvation and restoration for Israel, as the Lord manifested to the ancients.—They shall be baptized with water and with the Spirit—they shall lift up their hearts with joy and gladness, for the time of their redemption shall also roll on, and for their obedience to the faith they shall see the house of Jacob come with great glory, even with songs of everlasting joy, and with him partake of salvation.

Therefore, as the time draws near when the sun is to be darkened, the moon turn to blood, and the stars fall from heaven [Rev. 6:12-13], the Lord will bring to the knowledge of his people his commandments and statutes, that they may be prepared to stand when the earth shall reel to and fro as a drunken man, earth[p. 111]quakes cause the nations to tremble, and the destroying angel goes forth to waste the inhabitants at noon-day: for so great are to be the calamities which are to come upon the inhabitants of the earth, before the coming of the Son of Man the second time, that whoso is not prepared cannot abide; but such as are found faithful, and remain, shall be gathered with his people and caught up to meet the Lord in the cloud, and so shall they inherit eternal life.

I have now given you a rehearsal of what was communicated to our brother [Joseph Smith], when he was directed to go and obtain the record of the Nephites. I may have missed in arrangement in some instances, but the principle is preserved, and you will be able to bring forward abundance

of corroborating scripture upon the subject of the gospel and of the gathering. You are aware of the fact, that to give a minute rehearsal of a lengthy interview with a heavenly messenger, is very difficult, unless one is assisted immediately with the gift of inspiration. There is another item I wish to notice on the subject of visions. The Spirit you know, searches all things, even the deep things of God. When God manifests to his servants those things that are to come, or those which have been, he does it by unfolding them by the power of that Spirit which comprehends all things, always; and so much may be shown and made perfectly plain to the understanding in a short time, that to the world, who are occupied all their life to learn a little, look at the relation of it, and are disposed to call it false. You will understand then, by this, that while those glorious things were being rehearsed, the vision was also opened, so that our brother [Joseph Smith] was permitted to see and understand much more full and perfect than I am able to communicate in writing. I know much may be conveyed to the understanding in writing, and many marvellous truths set forth with the pen, but after all it is but a shadow, compared to an open vision of seeing, hearing and realizing eternal things. And if the fact was known, it would be found, that of all the heavenly communications to the ancients, we have no more in comparison than the alphabet to a quarto vocabulary. It is said, and I believe the account, that the Lord showed the brother of Jared [Moriancumer][5] all things which were to transpire from that day to the end of the earth, as well as those which had taken place [Eth. 3:25-26]. I believe that Moses was permitted to see the same [Moses 1:8, 27-29], as the Lord caused them to pass, in vision before him as he stood upon the mount; I believe that the Lord Jesus told many things to his apostles which are not written, and after his ascension unfolded all things unto them; I believe that Nephi, the son of Lehi, whom the Lord brought out of Jerusalem, saw the same; I believe that the twelve upon this continent, whom the Lord chose to preach his gospel, when he came down to manifest to this branch of the house of Israel, that he had other sheep who should hear his voice, were also permitted to behold the same mighty things transpire in vision before their eyes; and I believe that the angel Moroni, whose words I have been rehearsing, who communicated the knowledge of the record of the Nephites, in this age, saw also, before he hid up the same unto the Lord, great and marvellous things, which were to transpire when the same should come forth; and I also believe, that God will give line upon line, precept upon precept, to his saints, until all these things will be unfolded to them, and they finally sanctified and brought into the Celestial glory,

5. Brackets in original.

where tears will be wiped from all faces, and sighing and sorrowing flee away!

May the Lord preserve you from evil and reward you richly for all your afflictions, and crown you in his kingdom. Amen.

Accept, as ever, assurances of the fellowship and esteem of your unworthy brother in the gospel.

[OLIVER COWDERY.]

11.
OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, JULY 1835

Oliver Cowdery to W. W. Phelps, July 1835, "Letter VII," *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* 1 (July 1835): 155-59.

EDITORIAL NOTE

In July 1835 Oliver Cowdery continued his history by describing the "Hill Cumorah" in Manchester, New York. He acknowledges Joseph Smith's assistance with the phrase "to use his own words ..." For Phelps's response to the present letter, see *Messenger and Advocate* 1 (September 1835): 177-79 and 2 (October 1835): 193-95.

TO W. W. PHELPS, ESQ.

DEAR BROTHER:—Circumstances having heretofore intervened to prevent my addressing you previously upon the history of this church, you will not attribute the neglect to any want on my part, of a disposition to prosecute a subject so dear to me and so important to every saint, living as we do in the day when the Lord has began to fulfil his covenants to his long-dispersed and afflicted people.

Since my last yours of May and June have been received.[1] It will not be expected that I shall digress so far from my object, as to go into particular explanations on different items contained in yours. ... [p. 155] ...

You will remember that in my last I brought my subject down to the evening, or night of the 21st of September, 1823, and gave an outline of the conversation of the angel upon the important fact of the blessings, promises and covenants to Israel, and the great manifestations of favor to the world, in the ushering in of the fulness of the gospel, to prepare the way for the second advent of the Messiah, when he comes in the glory of the Father with the holy angels.

A remarkable fact is to be noticed with regard to this vision. In ancient time the Lord warned some of his servants in dreams: for instance, Joseph,

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1. See W. W. Phelps to Oliver Cowdery, May 1835, *Messenger and Advocate* 1 (May 1835): 114-15; W. W. Phelps to Oliver Cowdery, June 1835, *ibid.*, 1 (June 1835): 129-31.

the husband of Mary, was warned in a dream to take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt: also, the wise men were warned of the Lord in a dream not to return to Herod; and when "out of Egypt the Son was called," the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph again: also he was warned in a dream to turn aside into the parts of Galilee [Matt. 2:12-13, 22]. Such were the manifestations to Joseph, the favored descendant of the father of the faithful in dreams, and in them the Lord fulfilled his purposes: But the one of which I have been speaking is what would have been called an open vision. And though it was in the night, yet it was not a dream. There is no room for conjecture in this matter, and to talk of deception would be to sport with the common sense of every man who knows when he is awake, when he sees and when he does not see.

He could not have been deceived in the fact that a being of some kind appeared to him; and that it was an heavenly one, the fulfillment of his words, so minutely, up to this time, in addition to the truth and word of salvation which has been developed to this generation, in the book of Mormon, ought to be conclusive evidence to the mind of every man who is privileged to hear of the same. He was awake, and in solemn prayer, as you will bear in mind, when the angel made his appearance; from that glory which surrounded him the room was lit up to a perfect brilliancy, so that darkness wholly disappeared: he heard his words with his ears, and received a joy and happiness indescribable by hearing that his own sins were forgiven, and his former transgressions to be remembered against him no more, if he then continued to walk before the Lord according to his holy commandments. He also saw him depart, the light and glory withdraw, leaving a calmness and peace of soul past the language of man to paint—Was he deceived?

Far from this; for the vision was renewed twice before morning, unfolding farther and still farther the mysteries of godliness and those things to come. In the morning he went to his labor as usual, but soon the vision of the heavenly messenger was renewed, instructing him to go immediately and view those things of which he had been informed, with a promise that he should obtain them if he followed the directions and went with an eye single to the glory of God.

Accordingly he repaired to the place which had thus been described. But it is necessary to give you more fully the express instructions of the angel, with [p. 156] regard to the object of this work in which our brother [Joseph Smith] had now engaged—He was to remember that it was the work of the Lord, to fulfil certain promises previously made to a branch of the house of Israel, of the tribe of Joseph, and when it should be brought forth must be done expressly with an eye, as I said before, single to the glory of God, and

the welfare and restoration of the house of Israel.

You will understand, then, that no motive of a pecuniary, or earthly nature, was to be suffered to take the lead of the heart of the man thus favored. The allurements of vice, the contaminating influence of wealth, without the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit, must have no place in the heart nor be suffered to take from it that warm desire for the glory and kingdom of the Lord, or, instead of obtaining, disappointment and reproof would most assuredly follow. Such was the instruction and this the caution.

Alternately, as we could naturally expect, the thought of the previous vision was ruminating in his mind, with a reflection of the brightness and glory of the heavenly messenger; but again a thought would start across the mind on the prospects of obtaining so desirable a treasure—one in all *human* probability sufficient to raise him above a level with the common earthly fortunes of his fellow men, and relieve his family from want, in which, by misfortune and sickness they were placed.

It is very natural to suppose that the mind would revolve upon those scenes which had passed, when those who had acquired a *little* of this world's goods, by industry and economy, with the blessings of health or friends, or by art and intrigue, from the pockets of the day-laborer, or the widow and the fatherless, had passed by with a stiff neck and a cold heart, scorning the virtuous because they were poor, and lording over those who were subjected to suffer the miseries of this life.

Alternately did these, with a swift reflection of the words of the holy messenger,—"Remember, that he who does this work, who is thus favored of the Lord, must do it with his eye single to the glory of the same, and the welfare and restoration of the scattered remnants of the house of Israel"—rush upon his mind with the quickness of electricity. Here was a struggle indeed; for when he calmly reflected upon his errand, he knew that if God did not give, he could not obtain; and again, with the thought or hope of obtaining, his mind would be carried back to his former reflection of poverty, abuse,—wealth, grandeur and case, until before arriving at the place described, this wholly occupied his desire; and when he thought upon the fact of what was previously shown him, it was only with an assurance that he should obtain, and accomplish his desire in relieving himself and friends from want.

A history of the inhabitants who peopled this continent, previous to its being discovered to Europians by Columbus, must be interesting to every man; and as it would develope the important fact, that the present race were descendants of Abraham, and were to be remembered in the immutable covenant of the Most High to that man, and be restored to a knowledge of

the gospel, that they, with all nations might rejoice, seemed to inspire further thoughts of gain and income from such a valuable history. Surely, thought he, every man will sieze with eagerness, this knowledge, and this incalculable income will be mine. Enough to raise the expectations of any one like inexperience, placed in similar circumstances. But the important point in this matter is, that man does not see as the Lord, neither are his purposes like his. The small things of this life are but dust in comparison with salvation and eternal life.

It is sufficient to say that such were his reflections during his walk of from two to three miles: the distance from his father's house to the place pointed out. And to use his own words it seemed as though two invisible powers were influencing, or striving to influence his mind—one with the reflection that if he obtained the object of his pursuit, it would be through the mercy and condescension of the Lord, and that every act or performance in relation to it, must be in strict accordance with the instruction of that personage who communicated the intelligence to him first; and the other with the tho[ugh]'ts and reflections like those previously mentioned—contrasting his former and present circumstances in life with those to come. That precious instruction recorded on the sacred page—pray always—which was expressly impressed [p. 157] upon him, was at length entirely forgotten, and as I previously remarked, a fixed determination to obtain and ag[g]randize himself, occupied his mind when he arrived at the place where the record was found.

I must now give you some description of the place where, and the manner in which these records were deposited.

You are acquainted with the mail road from Palmyra, Wayne Co. to Canandaigua, Ontario Co. N.Y. and also, as you pass from the former to the latter place, before arriving at the little village of Manchester, say from three to four, or about four miles from Palmyra, you pass a large hill on the east side of the road. Why I say large, is, because it is as large perhaps, as any in that country. To a person acquainted with this road, a description would be unnecessary, as it is the largest and rises the highest of any on that route. The north end rises quite sudden until it assumes a level with the more southerly extremity, and I think I may say an elevation higher than at the south a short distance, say half or three fourths of a mile. As you pass toward Canandaigua it lessens gradually until the surface assumes its common level, or is broken by other smaller hills or ridges, water courses and ravines. I think I am justified in saying that this is the highest hill for some distance round, and I am certain that its appearance, as it rises so suddenly from a plain on the north, must attract the notice of the traveller as he passes by.

At about one mile west rises another ridge of less height, running parallel with the former, leaving a beautiful vale between. The soil is of the first quality for the country, and under a state of cultivation, which gives a prospect at once imposing, when one reflects on the fact, that here, between these hills, the entire power and national strength of both the Jaredites and Nephites were destroyed.

By turning to the 529th and 530th pages of the book of Mormon you will read Mormon's account of the last great struggle of his people, as they were encamped round this hill Cumorah [Morm. 6]. [It is printed Camorah, which is an error.][2] In this valley fell the remaining strength and pride of a once powerful people, the Nephites—once so highly favored of the Lord, but at that time in darkness, doomed to suffer extermination by the hand of their barbarous and uncivilized brethren. From the top of this hill, Mormon, with a few others, after the battle, gazed with horror upon the mangled remains of those who, the day before, were filled with anxiety, hope, or doubt. A few had fled to the South, who were hunted down by the victorious party, and all who would not deny the Savior and his religion, were put to death. Mormon himself, according to the record of his son Moroni, was also slain.

But a long time previous to this national disaster it appears from his own account, he foresaw approaching destruction. In fact, if he perused the records of his fathers, which were in his possession, he could have learned that such would be the case. Alma, who lived before the coming of the Messiah, prophesies this. He however, by divine appointment, abridged from those records, in his own style and language, a short account of the more important and prominent items, from the days of Lehi to his own time, after which he deposited, as he says, on the 529th page [Morm. 6:6], all the records in this same hill, Cumorah, and after gave his small record to his son Moroni, who, as appears from the same, finished, after witnessing the extinction of

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2. This is Oliver Cowdery's correction. Royal Skousen has suggested the misspelling of "Cumorah" in the first edition of the Book of Mormon is likely due to the printer's misreading of Cowdery's handwriting in the now lost original manuscript. Skousen argues, "[I]n Mormon the name *Cumorah* is consistently misspelled as *Camorah,* yet the printer's manuscript (in an unknown scribe's hand) shows a clear *u* for the spelling of the first vowel of *Cumorah*. On the other hand, throughout both manuscripts Oliver Cowdery frequently makes his *a*'s like *u*'s and vice versa. This scribal characteristic of his could well serve as the source for the misspelled *Camorah,* but only if the manuscript source for Mormon in the 1830 edition is the original manuscript (and presumably in Oliver Cowdery's hand)" (Skousen 1992, 23).

his people as a nation.

It was not the wicked who overcame the righteous; far from this: it was the wicked against the wicked, and by the wicked the wicked were punished.—The Nephites who were once enlightened, had fallen from a more elevated standing as to favor and privilege before the Lord, in consequence of the righteousness of their fathers, and now falling below, for such was actually the case, were suffered to be overcome, and the land was left to the possession of the red men, who were without intelligence, only in the affairs of their wars; and having no records, only preserving their history by tradition from father to son, lost the account of their true origin, and wandered from river to river, from hill to hill, from mountain to mountain, and from sea to sea, till the land was again peopled, in a measure, by a rude, wild, revengeful, warlike and barbarous race.—Such are our Indians.

This hill, by the Jaredites, was call[p. 158]ed Ramah [Eth. 15:11]: by it, or around it, pitched the famous army of Coriantumr their tents. Coriantumr was the last king of the Jaredites. The opposing army were to the west, and in this same valley, and near by, from day to day, did that mighty race spill their blood, in wrath, contending, as it were, brother against brother, and father, against son. In this same spot, in full view from the top of this same hill, one may gaze with astonishment upon the ground which was twice covered with the dead and dying of our fellow men. Here may be seen where once sunk to nought the pride and strength of two mighty nations; and here may be contemplated, in solitude, while nothing but the faithful record of Mormon and Moroni is now extant to inform us of the fact. ...

With sentiments of pure respect, I conclude by subscribing myself your brother in the gospel.

OLIVER COWDERY.

12.
OLIVER COWDERY STATEMENTS, SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 1835

1. Oliver Cowdery, Introduction to blessings, September 1835, Patriarchal Blessing Book, 1:8-9, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

2. Joseph Smith, Blessing on Oliver Cowdery, 18 December 1833, Expanded version by Oliver Cowdery, 2 October 1835, Patriarchal Blessing Book, 1:12, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

EDITORIAL NOTE

On 18 December 1833, Joseph Smith, Jr., gave blessings to his parents, his brothers, and Oliver Cowdery (see Faulring 1987, 17-19). When Cowdery copied these blessings into the Patriarchal Blessing Book in September and October 1835 (1:8-20), he wrote a lengthy introduction and "greatly expanded the blessings beyond their contents as initially recorded" (Faulring 1987, 19, n. 8; see also M. McConkie 1993, 178, n. 6). In both the introduction and the expanded version of Smith's blessing to Cowdery, Cowdery not only discussed the appearance of John the Baptist, as he had done with W. W. Phelps in his 7 September letter, but also alluded to the restoration of the high priesthood through Peter, James, and John. The introduction was written in September 1835, and the blessings were copied and expanded by Cowdery on 2 October 1835.

Because access to the original blessing book is restricted, the following transcription is a composite taken from the following sources: *Improvement Era* 7 (October 1904): 942; Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation,* ed. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City, 1954-56), 3:100-101; Richard L. Anderson, "Second Witness of Priesthood Restoration," *Improvement Era* 71 (September 1968): 16, 20; Larry C. Porter, "The Restoration of the Priesthood," *Religious Studies Center Newsletter* (Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah) 9 (May 1995): 2; Dean C. Jessee, "Sources for the Study of Joseph Smith," *Mormon Americana: A Guide to Sources and Collections in the United States,* ed. David J. Whittaker (Provo, UT: BYU Studies, 1995), 12; Larry C. Porter, "The Restoration of the Aaronic and Melchizedek

Priesthoods," *Ensign* (December 1996): 32; and a typescript prepared by an unidentified person. For a history of the Patriarchal Blessing Book, see introduction to I.C.2, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., BLESSINGS, 1834.

[*1. Introduction, September 1835*]

The following blessings by the spirit of prophecy, were pronounced by Joseph Smith, ju[nior]. the first elder, and first patriarch of the church: for although his Father laid hands upon, and blessed the fatherless, ther[e]by securing the blessings of the Lord unto them and their posterity, he was not the first elder, because God called upon his son Joseph, and ordained him to this power, and delivered to him the keys of the kingdom, that is, of authority and spiritual blessings upon the church, and through him the Lord revealed his will to the church: he was ministered unto by the angel, and by his direction, he obtained the records of the Nephites, and translated by the gift and power of God: he was ordained by the angel John,[1] unto the lesser or Aaronic priesthood, in company with myself, in the town of Harmony, Susquehannah County, Pennsylvania, on Fryday, the 15th day of May, 1829,[2] after which we repaired to the water, even to the Susquehannah River, and were baptized, he first ministering unto me and after—I to him. but before baptism, our souls were drawn out in mighty prayer—to know how we might obtain the blessings of baptism and of the Holy Spirit, according to the order of God, and we diligently saught for the right of the fathers and the authority of the holy priesthood, and the power to admin[ister] in the same: for we desired to be followers of righteousness and the possessors of greater knowledge, even the knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of God.[3] Therefore, we re-

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1. Cowdery had not named the angel in his letter to W. W. Phelps (see III.G.6, OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, 7 SEP 1834, 15-16).

2. A more detailed account was given to W. W. Phelps in September 1834. But here Cowdery gives the day of the month on which the event had occurred (see III.G.6, OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, 7 SEP 1834).

3. Linguistic affinity between Cowdery's introduction to his blessing and the Book of Abraham is clear: "I sought for the blessings, and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same; having been myself a follower of righteousness, desiring also to be one who possessed great knowledge. ... I became a rightful heir, a High Priest, holding the right belonging to the fathers" (Abra. 1:2). The church had acquired the Egyptian papyri in late June or early July 1835.

paired to the woods, even as our father Joseph said we should, that is to the bush,[4] and called upon the name of the Lord, and he answered us out of the heavens, and while we were in the heavenly vision the angel came down and bestowed upon us this priesthood; and then, as I have said, we repaired to the water and were baptized. After this we received the high and holy priesthood, but an account of this will be given elsewhere, or in another place.[5] Let it suffice that others had authority to bless, but after these blessings were given, of which I am about to write, Joseph Smith Sen'r. was ordained a president and patriarch under the hands of his son Joseph, myself, Sidney Rigdon, and Frederick G. Williams, presidents of the church.[6] These blessings were given by vision and the spirit of prophecy, on the 18th of December 1833, and written by my own hand at the time; and I know them to be correct and according to the mind of the Lord.

[*2. Oliver Cowdery Blessing: Expanded Version, 2 October 1835*][7]

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4. The reference to the prediction of "father Joseph" is probably an allusion to the purported contents of one of the Egyptian papyri acquired by the church in June/July 1835. In an article published later the same year, Cowdery described the Egyptian papyri as including "the writings of Abraham and Joseph" (*Messenger and Advocate* 2 [December 1835]: 234).

5. I am unaware of any detailed account of the visit of Peter, James, and John by either Oliver Cowdery or Joseph Smith. Besides the brief mention of the restoration of the high priesthood in Cowdery's blessing (given below), I am unable to say if Cowdery ever resumed the subject of priesthood restoration since access to these records is denied.

6. This ordination occurred on 18 December 1833, the same day as the original blessings were given.

7. Joseph Smith's 1832-34 journal records the occasion of Smith's blessing Cowdery, and quotes the opening portion of the blessing later recorded in the blessing book (Jessee 1992, 15-16; see also Faulring 1987, 17). However, Dean C. Jessee errs when he states that the blessing book "contains a more complete account of the proceedings of this meeting *written by Oliver Cowdery at the time*" (1992, 15, n. 3; emphasis added). While Cowdery claims in his introduction that the blessings were "written by my own hand at the time," references in the expanded version of his blessing to "Joseph in ancient days" and "Joseph of old" indicate that the additions probably post-date the June/July 1835 acquisition of the Egyptian papyri (see also n. 3 above). Additionally, comparison of the opening portion of the blessing recorded in Smith's journal with the blessing book indicates that Cowdery in copying also omitted a phrase not particularly kind to himself, "nevertheless there are are two evils in him that he must needs forsake or he cannot altogeth[er] escape the buffitings of the adver[sar]y if he shall forsak[e] these evils."

... These blessings shall come upon him [Oliver] according to the blessings of the prophecy of Joseph, in ancient days, which he said should come upon the Seer of the last days and the Scribe that should sit with him, and that should be ordained with him, by the hand of the angel in the bush, unto the lesser priesthood, and after receive the holy priesthood under the hands of ~~they~~ <those> who had been held in reserve for a long season; even those who received it under the hand of the Messiah,[8] while he should dwell in the flesh, upon the earth, and should receive the blessings with him, even the Seer of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, saith he, even Joseph of old. ...

8. Cowdery states that he and Smith were ordained "under the hands" of ancient apostles, but does not name them. By September 1835, the Doctrine and Covenants had appeared and two revelations had been altered to include references to Peter, James, and John (LDS D&C 7:7; 27:12-13).

13.
OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, OCTOBER 1835

Oliver Cowdery to W. W. Phelps, October 1835, "Letter VIII," *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* 2 (October 1835): 195-202.

EDITORIAL NOTE

In this last and perhaps most significant of his eight letters to W. W. Phelps, Cowdery further describes the "Hill Cumorah" and manner of deposit of the gold plates, relates the circumstances of Joseph Smith's 1823 visit to the hill and subsequent procurement of the plates, and recounts Smith's treasure-seeking activities with Josiah Stowell and related 1826 court hearing in South Bainbridge, New York.

DEAR BROTHER,—

In my last I said I should give, partially, a "description of the place where, and the manner in which these records were deposited:" the first promise I have fulfilled, and must proceed to the latter:

The hill of which I have been speaking, at the time mentioned, presented a varied appearance: the north end rose suddenly from the plain, forming a promontory without timber, but covered with grass. As you passed to the south you soon came to scattering timber, the surface having been cleared by art or by wind; and a short distance further left, you are surrounded with the common forest of the country. It is necessary to observe, that even the part cleared was only occupied for pas[p. 195]turage, its steep ascent and narrow summit not admitting the plow of the husbandman, with any degree of ease or profit. It was at the second mentioned place where the record was found to be deposited, on the west side of the hill, not far from the top down its side; and when myself visited the place in the year 1830, there were several trees standing: enough to cause a shade in summer, but not so much as to prevent the surface being covered with grass—which was also the case when the record was first found. ...

How far below the surface these records were placed by Moroni, I am unable to say; but from the fact that they had been some fourteen hundred years buried, and that too on the side of a hill so steep, one is ready to conclude that they were some feet below, as the earth would naturally wear more or

less in that length of time. But they being placed toward the top of the hill, the ground would not remove as much as at two-thirds, perhaps. Another circumstance would prevent a wearing of the earth: in all probability, as soon as timber had time to grow, the hill was covered, after the Nephites were destroyed, and the roots of the same would hold the surface. However, on this point I shall leave every man to draw his own conclusion, and from his own speculation, as I only promised to give a description of the place at the time the records were found in 1823.—It is sufficient for my present purpose, to know, that such is the fact: that in 1823, yes, 1823, a man with whom I have had the most intimate personal acquaintance, for almost seven years, actually discovered by the vision of God, the plates from which the book of Mormon, as much as it is disbelieved, was translated! Such is the case, though men rack their very brains to invent falsehoods, and then waft them upon every breeze, to the contrary notwithstanding.

I have now given sufficient on the subject of the hill Cumorah—it has a singular and imposing appearance for that country, and must excite the curious enquiry of every lover of the book of Mormon: though I hope never like Jerusalem, and the sepulchre of our Lord, the pilgrims. In my estimation, certain places are dearer to me for what they *now* contain than for what they *have* contained. For the satisfaction of such as believe I have been thus particular, and to avoid the question being a thousand times asked, more than any other cause, shall proceed and be as particular as heretofore. The manner in which the plates were deposited:

First, a hole of sufficient depth, (how deep I know not,) was dug. At the bottom of this was laid a stone of suitable size, the upper surface being smooth. At each edge was placed a large quantity of cement, and into this cement, at the four edges of this stone, were placed, erect, four others, *their* bottom edges resting *in* the cement at the outer edges of the first stone. The four last named, when placed erect, formed a box, the corners, or where the edges of the four came in contact, were also cemented so firmly that the moisture from without was prevented from entering. It is to be observed, also, that the inner surface of the four erect, or side stones was smooth. This box was sufficiently large to admit a breast-plate, such as was used by the ancients to defend the chest, &c. from the arrows and weapons of their enemy. From the bottom of the box, or from the breast-plate, arose three small pillars[1] composed of

1. Cowdery's description differs from that of Smith's, who said that "in the bottom of the box were laid two stones crossways of the box, and on these stones lay the plates and the other things with them" (I.A.15, JOSEPH

the same description of cement used on the edges; and upon these three pillars was placed the record of the children of Joseph, and of a people who left the tower far, far before the days of Joseph, or a sketch of each, which had it not be[e]n for this, and the never failing goodness of God, *we* might have perished in our sins, having been left to bow down before the altars of the Gentiles and to have paid homage to the priests of Baal! I must [p. 196] not forget to say that this box, containing the record was covered with another stone, the bottom surface being flat and the upper, crowning. But those three pillars were not so lengthy as to cause the plates and the crowning stone to come in contact. I have now given you, according to my promise, the manner in which this record was deposited; though when it was first visited by our brother, in 1823, a part of the crowning stone was visible above the surface while the edges were concealed by the soil and grass, from which circumstance you will see, that however deep this box might have been placed by Moroni at first, the time had been sufficient to wear the earth so that it was easily discovered, when once directed, and yet not enough to make a *perceivable* difference to the passer by. So wonderful are the works of the Almighty, and so far from our finding out are his ways, that one who trembles to take his name into his lips, is left to wonder at his exact providences, and the fulfilment of his purposes in the event of times and seasons. A few years sooner might have found even the top stone concealed, and discouraged our brother from attempting to make a further trial to obtain this rich treasure, for fear of discovery; and a few [years] later might have left the small box uncovered, and exposed its valuable contents to the rude calculations and vain speculations of those who neither understand common language nor fear God. But such would have been contrary to the words of the ancients and the promises made to them: and this is why I am left to admire the works and see the wisdom in the designs of the Lord in all things manifested to the eyes of the world: they show that all human inventions are like the vapors, while his word endures forever and his promises to the last generation.

Having thus digressed from my main subject to give a few items for the special benefit of all, it will be necessary to return, and proceed as formerly.—And if any suppose I have indulged too freely in reflections, I will only say, that it is my opinion, were one to have a view of the glory of God which is to cover Israel in the last days, and know that these,

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SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 7).

though they may be thought small things, were the beginning to effect the same, they would be at a loss where to close, should they give a moment's vent to the imaginations of the heart.

You will have wondered, perhaps, that the mind of our brother should be so occupied with the thoughts of the goods of this world, at the time of arriving at Cumorah, on the morning of the 22nd of September, 1823, after having been rapt in the visions of heaven during the night, and also seeing and hearing in open day; but the mind of man is easily turned, if it is not held by the power of God through the prayer of faith, and you will remember that I have said that two invisible powers were operating upon his mind during his walk from his residence to Cumorah, and that the one urging the certainty of wealth and ease in this life, had so powerfully wrought upon him, that the great object so carefully and impressively named by the angel, had entirely gone from his recollection that only a fixed determination to obtain now urged him forward. In this, which occasioned a failure to obtain, at that time, the record, do not understand me to attach blame to our brother: he was young, and his mind easily turned from correct principles, unless he could be favored with a certain round of experience. And yet, while young, untraditionated and untaught in the systems of the world, he was in a situation to be lead into the great work of God, and be qualified to perform it in due time.

After arriving at the repository, a little exertion in removing the soil from the edges of the top of the box, and a light pry, brought to his natural vision its contents. No sooner did he behold this sacred treasure than his hopes were renewed, and he supposed his success certain; and without first attempting to take it from its long place of deposit, he thought, perhaps, there might be something more equally as valuable, and to take only the plates, might give others an opportunity of obtaining the remainder, which could be secure, would still add to his store of wealth. These, in short, were his reflections, without once thinking of the solemn instruction of the heavenly messenger, that all must be done with an express view of glorifying God.

On attempting to take possession of the record a shock was produced upon his system, by an invisible power, [p. 197] which deprived him, in a measure, of his natural strength. He desisted for an instant, and then made another attempt, but was more sensibly shocked than before. What was the occasion of this he knew not—*there* was the pure unsullied record, as had been described—he had heard of the power of enchantment, and a thousand like stories, which held the hidden treasures of the earth, and supposed that physical exertion and personal strength was only necessary to enable him to

yet obtain the object of his wish.[2] He therefore made the third attempt with an increased exertion, when his strength failed him more than at either of the former times,[3] and without premeditating he exclaimed, "Why can I not obtain this book?" "Because you have not kept the commandments of the Lord," answered a voice, within a seeming short distance. He looked, and to his astonishment, there stood the angel who had previously given him the directions concerning this matter. In an instant, all the former instructions, the great intelligence concerning Israel and the last days, were brought to his mind: he thought of the time when his heart was fervently engaged in prayer to the Lord, when his spirit was contrite, and when his holy messenger from the skies unfolded the wonderful things connected with this record. He had come, to be sure, and found the word of the angel fulfilled concerning the reality of the record, but he had failed to remember the great end for which they had been kept, and in consequence could not have power to take them into his possession and bear them away.

At that instant he looked to the Lord in prayer, and as he prayed darkness began to disperse from his mind and his soul was lit up as it was the evening before, and he was filled with the Holy Spirit; and again did the Lord manifest his condescension and mercy: the heavens were opened and the glory of the Lord shone round about and rested upon him. While he thus stood gazing and admiring, the angel said, "Look!" and as he thus spake he beheld the prince of darkness, surrounded by his innumerable train of associates. All this passed before him, and the heavenly messenger said, "All this is shown, the good and the evil, the holy and impure, the glory of God and the power of darkness, that you may know hereafter the two powers and never be influenced or overcome by that wicked one. Behold, whatever entices and leads to good and to do good, is of God, and whatever does not is of that wicked one: It is he that fills the hearts of men with evil, to walk in darkness and blaspheme God; and you may learn from henceforth, that his ways are

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2. On early American folklore about "enchanted treasures," see Quinn 1987, 1-26; R. W. Walker 1984; and Butler 1979. However, numerous sources in this collection, especially those collected by Philastus Hurlbut, suggest that Smith's acquaintance with treasure lore was more than passing.

3. Smith's 1839 History simply states, "I made an attempt to take them [plates] out but was forbidden by the messenger" (I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, 7). Lucy Smith, however, said he took the plates from the box and "in the excitement of the moment he laid the record down in order to cover the box. ... When he turned again to take up the record it was gone" (I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:44; also IV.A.1, JOSEPH KNIGHT, SR., REMINISCENCE, CIRCA 1835-1847, 1).

to destruction, but the way of holiness is peace and rest. You now see why you could not obtain this record; that the commandment was strict, and that if ever these sacred things are obtained they must be by prayer and faithfulness in obeying the Lord. They are not deposited here for the sake of accumulating gain and wealth for the glory of this world: they were sealed by the prayer of faith, and because of the knowledge which they contain they are of no worth among the children of men, only for their knowledge. On them is contained the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as it was given to his people on this land, and when it shall be brought forth by the power of God it shall be carried to the Gentiles, of whom many will receive it, and after will the seed of Israel be brought into the fold of their Redeemer by obeying it also. Those who kept the commandments of the Lord on this land, desired this at his hand, and through the prayer of faith obtained the promise, that if their descendants should transgress and fall away, that a record might be kept and in the last days come to their children. These things are sacred, and must be kept so, for the promise of the Lord concerning them, must he fulfilled. No man can obtain them if his heart is impure, because they contain that which is sacred; and besides, should they be entrusted in unholy hands the knowledge could not come to the world, because they cannot be interpreted by the learning of this generation[4]; consequently, they would be considered of no worth, only as precious metal. Therefore, remember, that they are to be translated by the gift and power of God. By them will the Lord work a great and a marvelous work: the wisdom of the wise shall become as nought, and the understanding of the prudent shall be hid, and because the power of God shall be displayed those who profess to know [t]he truth but walk in deceit, shall trem[p. 198]ble with anger; but with signs and with wonders, with gifts and with healings, with the manifestations of the power of God, and with the Holy Ghost, shall the hearts of the faithful be comforted. You have now beheld the power of God manifested and the power of satan: you see that there is nothing that is desirable in the works of darkness; that they cannot bring happiness; that those who are overcome therewith are miserable, while on the other hand the righteous are blessed with a place in the kingdom of God where joy unspeakable surrounds them. There they rest beyond the power of the enemy of truth, where no evil can disturb them. The glory of

4. Early versions of the Anthon/Harris encounter support Cowdery's statement by emphasizing Anthon's inability to read the Book of Mormon characters. Smith's 1839 History and late Harris statements, on the other hand, claim Anthon had pronounced the translation correct (see discussion in "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection").

God crowns them, and they continually feast upon his goodness and enjoy his smiles. Behold, notwithstanding you have seen this great display of power, by which you may ever be able to detect the evil one, yet I give unto you another sign, and when it comes to pass then know that the Lord is God and that he will fulfil his purposes, and that the knowledge which this record contains will go to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people under the whole heaven.—This is the sign: When these things begin to be known, that is, when it is known that the Lord has shown you these things, the workers of iniquity will seek your overthrow: they will circulate falsehoods to destroy your reputation, and also will seek to take your life; but remember this, if you are faithful, and shall hereafter continue to keep the commandments of the Lord, you shall be preserved to bring these things forth; for in due time he will again give you a commandment to come and take them. When they are interpreted the Lord will give the holy priesthood to some, and they shall begin to proclaim this gospel and baptize by water, and after that they shall have power to give the Holy Ghost by the laying on of their hands. Then will persecution rage more and more; for the iniquities of men shall be revealed, and those who are not built upon the Rock will seek to overthrow this church; but it will increase the more opposed, and spread farther and farther, increasing in knowledge till they shall be sanctified and receive an inheritance where the glory of God will rest upon them; and when this takes place, and all things are prepared, the ten tribes of Israel will be revealed in the north country, whither they have been for a long season; and when this is fulfilled will be brought to pass that saying of the prophet—'And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord [Isa. 59:20]'—But, notwithstanding the workers of iniquity shall seek your destruction the arm of the Lord will be extended, and you will be borne off conqueror, if you keep all his commandments. Your name shall be known among the nations, for the work which the Lord will perform by your hands shall cause the righteous to rejoice and the wicked to rage: with the one it shall be had in honor, and with the other in reproach; yet, with these it shall be a terror because of the great and marvelous work which shall follow the coming forth of this fulness of the gospel. Now, go thy way, remembering what the Lord has done for thee, and be diligent in keeping his commandments, and he will deliver thee from temptations and all the arts and devices of the wicked one.—Forget not to pray, that thy mind may become strong, that when he shall manifest unto thee, thou mayest have power to escape the evil, and obtain those precious things."

Though I am unable to paint before the mind, a perfect description of the scenery which passed before our brother, I think I have said enough to

give you a field for reflection which may not be unprofitable. You see the great wisdom in God in leading him thus far, that his mind might begin to be more matured, and thereby be able to judge correctly, the spirits. I do not say that he would not have obtained the record had he went according to the direction of the angel—I say that he would; but God knowing all things from the beginning, began thus to instruct his servant. And in this it is plainly to be seen that the adversary of truth is not sufficient to overthrow the work of God. You will remember that I said, two invisible powers were operating upon the mind of our brother while going to Cumorah. In this, then, I discover wisdom in the dealings of the Lord: it was impossible for any man to translate the book of Mormon by the gift of God, and endure the afflictions, and temptations, and devices of satan, without being overthrown, unless he had been previously benefit[p. 199]ted with a certain round of experience: and had our brother obtained the record the first time, not knowing how to detect the works of darkness, he might have been deprived of the blessing of sending forth the word of truth to this generation. Therefore, God knowing that satan would thus lead his mind astray, began at that early hour, that when the full time should arrive, he might have a servant prepared to fulfil his purpose. So, however afflicting to his feelings this repulse might have been, he had reason to rejoice before the Lord and be thankful for the favors and mercies shown; that whatever other instruction was necessary to the accomplishing this great work, he had learned, by experience, how to discern between the spirit of Christ and the spirit of the devil.

From this time to September, 1827, few occurrences worthy of note, transpired. As a fact to be expected, nothing of importance could be recorded concerning a generation in darkness.—In the mean time our brother of whom I have been speaking, passed the time as others, in laboring for his support. But in consequence of certain false and slanderous reports which have been circulated justice would require me to say something upon the private life of one whose character has been so shamefully traduced. By some he is said to have been a lazy, idle, vicious, profligate fellow.[5] These I am prepared to contradict, and that too by the testimony of *many* persons with whom I have been intimately acquainted, and know to be individuals of the strictest veracity, and unquestionable integrity. All these strictly and virtually agree in saying, that he was an honest, upright, virtuous, and faithfully industrious young man. And those who say to the contrary can be influenced by no other motive than to destroy the reputation of one who never injured

5. Evidently a reference to the affidavits collected by Philastus Hurlbut in 1833 (see "Philastus Hurlbut Collection").

any man in either property or person.

While young, I have been informed he was afflicted with sickness[6]; but I have been told by those for whom he has labored, that he was a young man of truth and industrious habits. And I will add further that it is my conviction, if he never had been called to the exalted station in which he now occupies, he might have passed down the stream of time with ease and in respectability, without the foul and hellish tongue o[f] slander ever being employed against him. It is no more than to be expected, I admit, that men of corrupt hearts will try to traduce his character and put a spot upon his name: indeed, this is according to the word of the angel; but this does not prohibit me from speaking freely of his merits, and contradicting those falsehoods—I feel myself bound so to do, and I know that my testimony, on this matter, will be received and believed while those who testify to the contrary are crumbled to dust, and their words swept away in the general mass of lies when God shall purify the earth!

Connected with this, is the character of the family: and on this I say as I said concerning the character of our brother—I feel myself bound to defend the innocent always when opportunity offers. Had not those who are notorious for lies and dishonesty, also assailed the character of the family I should pass over them here in silence; but now I shall not forbear. It has been industriously circulated that they were dishonest, deceitful and vile. On this I have the testimony of responsible persons, who have said and will say, that this is basely false; and besides, a personal acquaintance for seven years, has demonstrated that all the difficulty is, they were once poor, (yet industrious,) and have now, by the help of God, arisen to note, and their names are like to, (indeed they will,) be handed down to posterity, and had among the righteous.—They are industrious, honest, virtuous and liberal to all. This is their character; and though many take advantage of their liberality, God will reward *them*; but this is the fact, and this testimony shall shine upon the records of the saints, and be recorded on the archives of heaven to be read in the day of eternity, when the wicked and perverse, who have vilely slandered them without cause or provocation, reap their reward with the unjust, where there is weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth!—if they do not repent.

Soon after this visit to Cumorah, a gentleman from the south part of the State, (Chanango County,) employed our brother as a common

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6. Perhaps a reference to Joseph Smith's leg operation about 1813 (see I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:27-33; and I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, Note A).

laborer, and accordingly he visited that section of the country[7]; and had he not been accused of digging down all, or nearly so, the mountains of Susquehannah, or [p. 200] causing others to do it by some art of nicromancy, I should leave this, for the present, unnoticed. You will remember in the mean time, that those who seek to vilify his character, say that he has always been notorious for his idleness. This gentleman, whose name is [Josiah] Stowel,[8] resided in the town of [South] Bainbridge, on or near the head waters of the Susquehannah river. Some forty miles south, or down the river, in the town of Harmony, Susquehannah county, Pa. is said to be a cave or subterraneous recess, whether entirely formed by art or not I am uninformed, neither does this matter; but such is said to be the case.—where a company of Spaniards, a long time since, when the country was uninhabited by white settlers, excavated from the bowels of the earth ore, and coined a large quantity of money; after which they secured the cavity and evacuated, leaving a part still in the cave, purposing to return at some distant period. A long time elapsed and this account came from one of the individuals who was first engaged in this mining business. The country was pointed out and the spot minutely described.[9] This, I believe, is the substance, so far as my memory serves, though I shall not pledge my veracity for the correctness of the account as I have given.—Enough however, was credited of the Spaniard's story, to excite the belief of many that there was a fine sum of the precious metal lying coined in this subterraneous vault, among whom was our employer; and accordingly our brother was required to spend a few months with some others in excavating the earth, in pursuit of this treasure.

While employed here he became acquainted with the family of Isaac Hale,[10] of whom you read in several of the productions of those who have sought to destroy the validity of the book of Mormon.[11] It may be necessary hereafter, to refer you more particularly to the conduct of this family, as their influence has been considerably exerted to destroy the reputation of our brother, probably because he married a daughter of the

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7. In October 1825 Josiah Stowell hired Joseph Smith to help him search for treasure at Harmony, Pennsylvania.

8. On Josiah Stowell (1770-184?), see introduction to IV.B.2, MARTHA CAMPBELL TO JOSEPH SMITH, 19 DEC 1843.

9. On the location of the Spanish mine, see introduction to V.E.1, ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT, 1 NOV 1825.

10. On Isaac Hale (1763-1839), see introduction to V.A.1, ISAAC HALE STATEMENT, 1834.

11. See V.A.1, ISAAC HALE STATEMENT, 1834.

same, contrary to some of their wishes, and in connection with this, to certain statements of some others of the inhabitants of that section of country. But in saying this I do not wish to be understood as uttering aught against Mrs. Smith, (formerly Emma Hale.)[12] She has most certainly evinced a decidedly correct mind and uncommon ability of talent and judgement, in a manifest willingness to fulfil, on her part, that passage in sacred writ,—"and they twain shall be one flesh,"—by accompanying her husband, against the wishes and advice of her relatives, to a land of strangers: and however I may deprecate their actions, can say in justice, *her* character stands as fair for morality, piety and virtue, as any in the world. Though you may say, this is a digression from the subject proposed, I trust I shall be indulged, for the purpose of satisfying many, who have heard so many slanderous reports that they are lead to believe them true because they are not contradicted; and besides, *this* generation are determined to oppose every item in the form or under the pretence of revelation, unless it comes through a man who has always been more pure than Michael the great prince; and as this is the fact, and my opposers have put me to the neces[s]ity, I shall be more prolix, and have no doubt, before I give up the point, shall prove to your satisfaction, and to that of every man, that the translator of the book of Mormon is worthy the appellation of a seer and a prophet of the Lord. In this I do not pretend that he is not a man subject to passion like other men, beset with infirmities and encompassed with weaknesses; but if he is, all men were so before him, and a pretence to the contrary would argue a more than mortal, which would at once destroy the whole system of the religion of the Lord Jesus; for he anciently chose the weak to overcome the strong, the foolish to confound the wise, (I mean considered so by this world,) and by the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe.

On the private character of our brother I need add nothing further, at present, previous to his obtaining the records of the Nephites, only that while in that country, some very officious person complained of him as a disorderly person, and brought him before the authorities of the county; but there being no cause of action he was honorably acquit[t]ed.[13] From this time forward

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12. On Emma Hale (1804-79), see "Introduction to Emma Hale Collection."

13. Presumably a reference to Smith's 1826 court hearing in South Bainbridge (see IV.F.1, BAINBRIDGE [NY] COURT RECORD, 20 MAR 1826). The "officious person" was Peter G. Bridgeman, a nephew of Josiah Stowell.

he continued to receive instructions concerning the coming forth of the fulness of the gospel, from the mouth of the heavenly messenger, un[p. 201]til he was directed to visit again the place where the records was deposited.

For the present I close, whith [with] a thankful heart that I am permitted to see thousands rejoicjng [rejoicing] in the assurance of the promises of the Lord, confirmed unto them through the obedience of the everlasting covenant.

As ever your brother in the Lord Jesus.

OLIVER COWDERY.

TO W. W. PHELPS.

14.
OLIVER COWDERY COURT STATEMENT, CIRCA 1838-1848

1. Brigham Young, "A Discourse by President Brigham Young, Delivered in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, April 6, 1855," *Journal of Discourses of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,* 26 vols. (Liverpool, England: Albert Carrington [and others], 1853-86), 2:257-58.

2. George Q. Cannon, "Discourse by President George Q. Cannon, Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday Afternoon, September 18, 1881," *Journal of Discourses of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,* 26 vols. (Liverpool, England: Albert Carrington [and others], 1853-86), 22:254.

3. Charles M. Nielsen, Missionary Journal (1883-90), 175-76, Archives, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

4. Charles M. Nielsen to Heber J. Grant, 10 February 1898, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

5. Charles M. Nielsen to Heber J. Grant, 14 November 1899, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

6. Charles M. Nielsen, Affidavit, 3 December 1909, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

7. Charles M. Nielsen, "An Address Delivered by Judge C. M. Nielsen in the Twenty-fourth Ward Meeting House, Salt Lake City, Utah, February 20, 1910," *Liahona the Elders' Journal* 8 (30 August 1910): 162-64.

8. Charles M. Nielsen, Autobiography, 39-43, circa 1911, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.[1]

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1. A nearly identical typescript of Nielsen's Autobiography (c. 1911) is located at Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

9. Charles M. Nielsen, "Testimony of Charles M. Nielsen," 1-2, circa 1914, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah. Published in Charles M. Nielsen, "Witness Tells Oliver Cowdery's Testimony on Book of Mormon," *Deseret News,* 17 October 1931, [church section] 3.

10. Seymour B. Young, General Conference Sermon, April 1921, *Report of the Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,* April 1921 (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, semi-annual), 115.

11. Charles M. Nielsen, Affidavit, 24 January 1935, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Soon after his excommunication by church authorities in Missouri in 1838, Oliver Cowdery moved to Kirtland, Ohio, where he studied law and taught school. Afterwards he moved to Tiffin, Ohio, where he began practicing law about January 1840. Following his residence in Tiffin, Cowdery lived briefly in Elkhorn, Wisconsin, where he continued practicing law and unsuccessfully ran for the state legislature in 1848 (R. L. Anderson 1981, 37-47). The eleven sources presented here deal with Cowdery's reported affirmation of his Book of Mormon testimony before a court of law while he was acting as a prosecuting attorney. However, the claim rests on less than satisfactory grounds.

The various accounts are inconsistent and some elements of the story troubling. In the earliest account, for instance, Brigham Young (1855) states that the trial occurred in Michigan (item 1), while George Q. Cannon (1881) claims that it was in Ohio (item 2). Charles M. Nielsen[2] (1909-35) inconsistently names Michigan (items 3, 6-9, 11) and Illinois (items 4-5). Seymour B. Young (1921) fails to give the trial's location (item 10). Presently there is no evidence for Cowdery practicing law in either Michigan or Illinois.[3]

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2. Charles M. Nielsen (1856-?), born Iver Carl Magnus Nielsen in Norway, was converted and baptized in 1872. After immigrating to Salt Lake City in 1876, he served a mission in the northwestern states (1883-85). He was admitted to the Utah bar in 1895, and subsequently served four years as justice of the peace in Salt Lake City. In 1912 he was called on a mission to Norway. He was living in Salt Lake City in 1935 (Jenson 1971, 2:678-79).

3. Concerning the claim of Cowdery's practicing law in Michigan, Stanley R. Gunn has written: "[I]t is hard to conceive of Oliver's ever having practiced law in Michigan, unless it be merely to try one case and then go

Of those who reported on Cowdery's court statement, Nielsen is the only one to name his source: Robert Barrington,[4] a man he converted in 1884 near Hastings, Minnesota. Nielsen and a missionary companion stayed at Barrington's home 2-4 May 1884, preaching the Mormon gospel to the family and others. Nielsen recorded in his journal: "We stayed with Mr. Barrington until the 4th and <had> a very enjoyable time. we explained the prin=ciples of the Gospel to him and Family, one Bro: Richard Cox,[5] who had embraced the Gospel in the earlier days of the church, had moved up in to this Country and had bore his testimony about the Gospel to Mr. Barrington and Mr. [William] Cole. Bro: Cox went to Calefornia, where he afterwards died" (p. 98).

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back to either Tiffin, Ohio or Elkhorn, Wisconsin. The reasoning in favor of this does not seem at all logical. ... Although attempts have been made to check the court records verifying that Oliver practiced in Michigan, the writer could find no such record. ... Following Oliver's cases through the various terms of court and following him by the letters he has written, we can see no period when he could have resided in Michigan long enough to establish a practice for himself. ..." (Gunn 1962, 197, 200).

4. Robert Barrington (1819-?), son of Charles B. (d. 1831) and Esther (Davis) Barrington, was born in Cayuga County, New York. He is listed with his father in the 1830 census of Mentz, Cayuga County, New York (1830:399). Following the death of his father in 1831, Barrington may have lived with his older brother, Smith Barrington, along with his mother and a younger sister, in Conquest, Cayuga County, New York (see U.S. Census, 1840:299). In 1839 he married Lydia Jane Wetherell, evidently in New York. About age twenty (1839/40), he moved (with his mother and older brothers) to Burlington, Calhoun County, Michigan, where he is listed in the 1850 census with his wife and four children (1850:222). According to this census, the Barringtons' first child, Lucy, was born in Michigan about 1840. In 1854 he moved to Hastings, Dakota County, Minnesota, later settling on a large farm at nearby Vermillion, where the Barringtons are enumerated in the 1860, 1870, and 1880 censuses (Warner and Foote 1881, 483). Nielsen evidently first contacted Barrington in December 1883, later baptizing the family in May 1884. He subsequently emigrated to Utah, where he is listed in the 1900 census of Salt Lake City, Utah. In his 1898 letter to Heber J. Grant, Nielsen states that Barrington had immigrated to Utah (item 4; cf. item 7), and in his 1899 letter that Barrington had been "outside of the church for many years, and is very bitter" (item 5). But in his 1935 affidavit, Nielsen states that Barrington immigrated to Idaho and died a member of the church (item 11).

5. Richard Cox appears in the 1850 census of Galena, Jo Daviess County, Illinois, as a fifty-five-year-old "Miner" (1850:245).

The Nielsen accounts are the most detailed, but also the most puzzling. While Young simply states that Cowdery was "pleading law" and Cannon says he "practiced law," Nielsen claims Cowdery was the "prosecuting attorney," a detail unsupported by the evidence and questioned by both Stanley R. Gunn and Richard L. Anderson (Gunn 1962, 197, 200; R. L. Anderson 1981, 58). In his first letter to Heber J. Grant, dated 10 February 1898, Nielsen names Illinois as the location of the trial (item 4); and in a subsequent letter following his visit with Barrington in Salt Lake City in November 1899, Nielsen specifically told Grant that the trial occurred in Galena, Jo Daviess County, Illinois (item 5). Yet in every other statement Nielsen names Michigan as the location of the trial (items 3, 6-9, 11). Why did Nielsen ignore the information he had received directly from Barrington?[6]

Unlike the other accounts, the Nielsen/Barrington documents give an approximate time for the trial. Nielsen states that the trial occurred when Barrington was twenty (item 6), twenty-one (item 7), "a little over twenty years of age" (item 9), or "about twenty" (item 11), which would date the trial to 1839, 1840, or soon after. In his 1909 affidavit, Nielsen states that the trial occurred "in the early [18]40s" (item 6). However, Barrington also said the trial took place before he was married (item 4), which according to the *History of Dakota County* occurred in 1839 (Warner and Foote 1881, 483). Cowdery left Far West, Missouri, in June 1838, and arrived at Kirtland, Ohio, before 9 November, when he appears as secretary of one of the organizational meetings of the Western Reserve Teacher's Seminary and Kirtland Institute (see *Painesville Telegraph,* 29 November 1838; see also R. L. Anderson 1981, 39). In a letter written to his brothers, Warren and Lyman, dated 2 June 1838, Cowdery contemplated going to Illinois "soon," but it is unknown if he carried out his plan (see Gunn 1962, 263-66). One might speculate that he traveled

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6. Richard L. Anderson attempts to reconcile the discrepancies in the Nielsen/Barrington account by speculating that Barrington had really heard of Cowdery's court statement from Cox, and "[a]t some stage in the telling Barrington evidently created the erroneous impression that he had heard Cowdery" (R. L. Anderson 1981, 58). Concluding that the "Nielsen account is thirdhand instead of secondhand," Anderson suggests that the Nielsen account is perhaps a "distant recollection" of an authentic "historical incident," which probably occurred in Tiffin, Ohio (ibid.). However, soon after an interview with Barrington, Nielsen reported to Heber J. Grant in 1899 that Barrington and Cox were in the courtroom together when Cowdery bore his testimony (item 5; cf. R. L. Anderson 1981, 64, n. 19).

to Galena, Illinois, where the 1840 census locates Richard Cox. However, Barrington's whereabouts in 1840 remains unknown.

[*1. Brigham Young Account, 1855*]

... Oliver Cowdery also left the Church, though he never denied the Book of Mormon, not even in the wickedest days he ever saw, and [p. 257] came back into the Church before he died. A gentleman in Michigan said to him, when he was pleading law, "Mr. Cowdery, I see your name attached to this book; if you believe it to be true, why are you in Michigan?" The gentleman read over the names of the witnesses, and said, "Mr. Cowdery, do you believe this book?" "No, sir," replied Oliver Cowdery. "That is very well, but your name is attached to it, and you say here that you saw an angel, and the plates from which this book is said to be translated, and now you say that you do not believe it. Which time was you right?" Mr. Cowdery replied, "There is my name attached to that book, and what I have there said that I saw, I know that I saw, and belief has nothing to do with it, for knowledge has swallowed up the belief that I had in the work, since I know it is true." He gave this testimony when he was pleading law in Michigan. After he had left the Church he still believed "Mormonism;" ...[7]

[*2. George Q. Cannon Account, 1881*]

... When I was a boy I heard it stated concerning Oliver Cowdery, that after he left the Church he practised law, and upon one occasion, in a court in Ohio, the opposing counsel thought he would say something that would overwhelm Oliver Cowdery, and in reply to him in his argument he alluded to him as the man that had testified and had written that he had beheld an

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7. This is the earliest known statement about Cowdery's courtroom testimony. "Although this account also wrongly places him [Cowdery] as practicing law in Michigan," states Richard L. Anderson, "there is more to this story than first meets the eye. First, it is told within five years of his death, when the knowledge of his life was relatively vivid. Next, the fact that this story comes from the Young family is most significant. The person who did most to bring about his reconciliation to the Church was Phineas Young, who married Oliver's half-sister. In the decade that his brother-in-law was out of the Church, Phineas kept up a constant correspondence and regular visits, reporting Cowdery's actions favorably to his brother Brigham in an attempt to bring about Oliver's reinstatement" (R. L. Anderson 1981, 59; see also Young et al., 1853-86, 7:55). On Brigham Young (1801-77), see introduction to III.K.19, BRIGHAM YOUNG ACCOUNTS, 1855 & 1857.

angel of God, and that angel had shown unto him the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated. He supposed, of course, that it would cover him with confusion, because Oliver Cowdery then made no profession of being a "Mormon," or a Latter-day Saint; but instead of being affected by it in this manner, he arose in the court, and in his reply stated that, whatever his faults and weaknesses might be, the testimony which he had written, and which he had given to the world was literally true. ...[8]

[*3. Charles M. Nielsen Journal, date undetermined*][9]

—Philip has nothing on me!!—

Traveling on foot or behind "the Trains" I came to the City of Hasting[s] [Minnesota]. having no money, I walked up a leading Street in this large City. there was a large mercantile Store on the other side of me

A voice, like unto Phillips w[h]ispered three times in q[u]ick succession. "go across the street and speak to the man who is now about to enter his Surry[.]" I looked behind me to see if some one was standing behind me.— the third voice came and I hurried across the crowded Street. and on hailing

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8. Concerning Cannon's account, Richard L. Anderson states: "Cannon later related that he heard the details of this incident 'when I was a boy.' A score of similar references in his public speeches all refer to the period prior to his Hawaiian mission in 1850. In his early twenties then, Cannon does not thereafter refer to himself as a 'boy.' This means that Cannon evidently heard the courtroom incident while Oliver Cowdery was still alive. Although giving a late recollection, George Q. Cannon had a remarkable intellect and a great capacity for accurate detail in his personal writing. Furthermore, his version of the courtroom incident is consistent with Oliver's conservative references to Mormonism while out of the Church and places his law practice in the right state. For these reasons, Cannon's 1881 description of the courtroom testimony of the Book of Mormon witness is probably the most correct one" (R. L. Anderson 1981, 59-60). On George Q. Cannon (1827-1901), see introduction to VI.A.18, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH GEORGE Q. CANNON, 27 FEB 1884.

9. Nielsen's account of his conversation with Barrington appears at the end of his journal with other material subsequently added to expand on entries in the dated section of his record. Under the date 2 December 1883, Nielsen recorded that he was "called to [go to] Hasting[s] in Dakota Co" (p. 63). Also, under the date 12 December 1883, Nielsen recorded: "I left Minneapolis and proceeded to Hasting[s], from there I went on to La Crosse City in the state of Wiscounsin" (p. 63). Evidently at the time of his conversation with Barrington at Hastings, Minnesota, Nielsen did not think it significant enough to record in his missionary journal.

him "how do you do" we soon got in to conversation. When he hird [heard] I was a morman elder, he almost embraced me and told me to get in to his Sury and go with him [to his] house. Coming to his Home, a well to do Farmer, he told me the following story!! "One day (he lived in Mishigan) I asked my Father[10] to let me off half a day from my Farm work as I wanted to go up into the City.

Coming up to the City I noticed a greed [great?] crowd of people go[i]ng up to the cour[t] House so I followed too to see what excitement there was in Court.—One Lawyer was talking to the Jurry, making his op[e]ning argument in a murder case.—When he finished, the Prosecut[i]ng attorney Oliver Cowdery had been challenged by [the] Defendants att[orne]y. to tell the Judge & Jurry about Josep[h] Smith [p. 175] and the Gold plates he and Joe Smith had dug out of the grounds: it caused an awful excit[e]ment in the court, crowded with people and Lawyer[s] to hear the close of the murder case[.] "Oliver Cowdery" spok[e] firmely, and raising his hand upwards, said among other things! "I saw the heaven open and the ~~glorius~~ glorius Light[,] and a person standin[g] in it a few feet above the ground, spoke to us and told us about the Book of Mormon was correctly translated."]

(oh I wish I could remember more of what he told me. I am sorry I did not write more of it down)

Later I baptised him and his whole Family, he said he could never forget what he heard Oliver Cowdery say.

Leaving there on my way to Wisconsin. ... [p. 176]

[*4. Charles M. Nielsen Letter, 10 February 1898*][11]

C. M. Nielsen
Lawyer.

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10. Barrington's mention of his father is problematic. According to the *History of Dakota County, Minnesota,* Robert Barrington's father, Charles Barrington, died in 1831 (Warner and Foote 1881, 483). Charles Barrington is listed in the 1830 census of Mentz, Cayuga County, New York (1830:399). He is absent from the 1840 census, and his wife, Esther, is evidently living with her son, Smith Barrington, in Conquest, Cayuga County, New York (1840:299). Later, she is again listed with Smith Barrington in the 1850 census of Burlington, Calhoon County, Michigan (1850:222). This situation would tend to rule out the possibility that Barrington refers to a step-father.

11. My transcription has been taken from a typescript of the original typed and signed affidavit.

Constitution Building

Salt Lake City, Utah Febr. 10, 1898

Apostle Heber J. Grant.

Dear Brother:—I hasten to improve the present to comply with your request.

In the spring of 1893 [1883], I was called to go to the Northern States Mission, and having been appointed Elder in Minn[esota]. I started to perform my duties, and on account of the scarcity of Elders in that state at the time, I traveled principally alone. While thus traveling from house to house one day, I tried a great many places to obtain permiss=ion to stop over night, telling the people that I was sent as a servant of God to preach the Gospel without purse or scrip, and having no money to pay my way. One day, the date I do not now remember, I had tried about half a dozen places without being able to obtain per=mission to stop, because as soon as they found out that I was a Mormon Elder, they ordered me to leave their premises forthwith. While thus attempting in vain to find a stopping place, I noticed a team standing outside a store, if I remember correctly, and started towards it. As I approached the wagon, an elderly gentleman came out, and while preparing his team to start home, I hailed him and asked him how far he was going to travel, which he told me. I then asked him if I could ride with him, and before answering whether I could or not, he asked me who I was and where I was going and where I came from etc. I answered all these questions at once by saying that I was a servant of God sent to preach the Gospel. He said "It is not very often that I see one of God's servants traveling the way that you seem to be travel=ing, but by the way where do you live?["] I told him that I was a Mormon Elder sent from Utah; as soon as I had told him this, he grab[b]ed me by the hand and gave me a squeeze that I have scarcely forgotten yet saying "You are the man I have been anxious to see for many many years" [p. 1] "Get into my wagon as soon as you can and I will take you to my home and when we get there, I will inform you why I have been waiting so long to see an Elder from Utah." When we came to his house, he introduced me to his wife and children, and told her that here was a servant of God that they had so long been waiting to see. "Now," said he to his wife, "Fix up some supper for him, as I under=stand that he is quite hungry, and you Mr. Nielsen can start in and eat, and I will talk and tell you a portion of my past history?"

"My first acquaintance with the Mormon people was in the state of Illinois. I do not now remember the year, but it is many years ago, because I was then unmarried and quite a young man. One day I left my home

to go up to the town which was the county seat of the county in which I lived, and after having tied my horses, prepatory to transacting some business in the city, I noticed a great many people going up towards the court house; being inquisitive and thinking that something more than usual was going on at the court house, I concluded to follow suit. I went up to the court house, and on entering the same, I learned that a man was being tried for murder. The witnesses had all been examined, and the prosecuting attorney had just begun an earnest argument to the jury a few minutes before I entered, and after he had concluded, the attorney for the prisoner arose, and after having addressed himself to the court and the jury, he turned towards the prosecuting attorney, whom he called Oliver Cowdery, saying in a loud and very sarcastic voice:

"Mr. Cowdery, you have told the jury all that you know or ever pretended to know about the prisoner's bad character, the horrible crime he has committed, and the necessity for the public good to have him punished to the full extent of the law. Now I trust, and by the way I challenge you, Mr. Cowdery, that when you shall reply to me in your closing argument to this jury, you will tell them about [p. 2] your connection with Joe Smith the great Mormon impostor, and I trust that you will make plain to this jury, if your conscience will allow you, and state how many thousands of dollars you have obtained from the American people by fraude and misrepresentation, in connection with the gold bible that you and Joe Smith dug out of the Cumorah Hill. And when you get through with that, tell them about the appearance of John the Baptist and other angels, as they appeared to you and Joe Smith."

After having finished this little speach to Oliver Cowdery, he turned to the jury and abused Oliver Cowdery and did all in his power to rehearse all the lies and slanders that had so frequently been circulated about the Mormon people, in his attempt to prejidice the jury against the prosecution. After he had finished Oliver Cowdery arose and in a calm and determined manner, and after having addressed the court and the jury, he said:

"My brother attorney who defends this unfortunate man, has found it necessary to drag my past history into this case, but allow me, gentlemen of the jury, to say to you that it is not because of my good deeds that I am here to-day standing before you to prosecute this prisoner; but it is because I have broken the covenants that I have made with my Heavenly Father, and because of that I have been cast out of His Church. As to my connection with Joseph Smith and the Golden Bible so called, I will say that as I stand here in the presence of you and my Maker. I testify (pointing to his eyes and ears) that these eyes saw the angel of God and these ears heard the words,

declaring to me that the Book of Mormon which had been translated from the Golden Plates, was true. Again I testify to you that while I was alone with Joseph the Prophet, in the attitude of prayer, a light descended from heaven, the glory of which far exceeds the noon-day sun, and in the [p. 3] midst of which a personage appeared who told us that his name was John, formerly called John the Baptist. He ordained first Joseph by laying his hands upon his head, and then he ordained me in the same manner to the Aaronic Priesthood. Later, after having baptized each other according to his instructions, we ordained each other, but as none of us had received the Holy Ghost, or had received authority to confer the same upon us, we concluded to go into the forest, and cleared a space in the center of which was a stump, and where we kneeled down and took turns in calling upon the Lord, until a glorious light encircled us, and as we arose on account of the light, three persons stood before us dressed in white, their faces beaming with glory. The person in the center addressing Joseph and me, said "My name is Peter and (pointing to the others) these are James and John. We have come here according to command from the Almighty to confer upon you the Apostleship to which we have been ordained." After having made these few remarks they proceeded to ordain us.

"You gentlemen of the jury, this is God's truth and I dare not deny it; if I did there would be no forgiveness for me in this world or in the world to come. It is no imagination on my part, because I saw these personages as plain as I see any of you here in the jury box, and I am not ashamed to make this statement to you, although the attorney on the other side has attempted to hold me up to ridicule. This is all that I now consider proper to say, and I think it will be suffic=ent answer to the false charges and accusations made against me here in open court."

"Now, Mr. Nielsen, after having heard these remarks from Mr. Cowdery, who at that time according to his own statements, was outside the Mormon Church, I think you will not be surprised at my great joy at meeting you. ... [p. 4] ...[12]

... Now Mr. Nielsen, I and my whole house are ready to receive and obey, whatever command the Lord has sent you to proclaim to us.

The whole family embraced the Gospel and emigrated to Utah.

Your brother in the Gospel,
C. M. Nielsen. [p. 5]

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12. At this point in Nielsen's narrative, Barrington tells a story unrelated to the present subject.

[*5. Charles M. Nielsen Letter, 14 November 1899*][13]

Salt Lake City, Nov. 14th, 1899.

Apostle H. J. Grant.

Dear Brother:—

Saturday Nov. 11th 1899 I called on Robert Barrington who is now eighty-two years of age. He is the man whom I referred to in my letter to you of Feby. 10th 1898, who testified to being present at a murder trial in the State of Illinois where Oliver Cowdery was the pro=secuting attorney. He stated to me Saturday that the place where this trial occurred was in Galena [Jo Daviess County], Ill. He reiterated the fact that Oliver Cowdery did testify in his hearing to the visitations of John the Bapt=ist and Peter, James and John to him (Cowdery) and to the Prophet Joseph Smith, and that they were ordained to the Aaronic Priesthood by John the Baptist, and to the Apostleship by Peter, James and John.

He testified also to hearing Oliver Cowdery proclaim before the Court and Jury as to the visitation of the angel with the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated and to hearing a voice from heaven declaring that they had been correctly translated.

Mr [Richard] Cox, who had been a very prominent Elder in the Church during the lifetime of Joseph the Prophet, who was present with Mr. Barrington in the Court at the time when Oliver Cowdery made this dec=laration to the Counsel for the defendent in said case, called Mr. Barrington's attention to the powerful argument of Oliver Cowdery, after they had left the Court room.

Mr. Robert Barrington has been outside of the church for many years, and is very bitter, but he does not deny the statement he made to me aforesaid.

Your Brother in the Gospel,
C. M. Nielsen.

Brother Nielsen at my request tried to get a signature from Mr. Robert Barrington covering the statement made to me, but was not able to do so.

Heber J. Grant

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13. My transcription has been taken from a typed copy of the original letter.

[*6. Charles M. Nielsen Affidavit, 3 December 1909*][14]

State of Utah,
County of Salt Lake

C. M. Nielsen, being first duly sworn according to Law, or oath says:

That he is a citizen of the United States of America, and a resident of the City and County of Salt Lake, State of Utah.

That on or about the — day of — 1884, while he was on a mission in the state of Minnesota, he became acquainted with a Mr. ~~Robert~~ Barrington a prominent farmer of that State, (the name of the County in said State affiant is unable to give, as he forgot to write it down in the daily journal he was then keeping) who, then informed of affiant's business as a Mormon missionary became very interested, and related to affiant the following incident that took place while Mr. Barrington was about 20 years of age; he says: One day while I lived in — Michigan, (I cannot remember the name of the City) I walked up in town, and on arriving on the main street, I noticed a great many people walking up to the County Courthouse, and not knowing what was going on there, I became inquisitive, and made up my mind to go there also, and on entering the Court room I found that the same was crowded to overflowing, but being young and strong I soon made my way up to the railing in front of the bench and jury box, and I then learned from a friend that it was a murder trial on before the Court, and that the young attorney who was then addressing or making his opening argument to the jury was the County attorney, Oliver Cowdery; as soon as Mr. Cowdery closed his opening argument, the attorney for the prisoner arose, and, in a sneering way, said: "May it please the Court, and gentlemen of the jury, I challenge Mr. Cowdery, since he seems to know so much about this poor defendant, to [p. 1] tell us something about his connection with Joe Smith, and the digging out of the hill of the Mormon Bible, and how Mr. Cowdery helped Joe Smith to defraud the American people out of a whole lot of money by selling the Mormon Bible and telling them that an Angel appeared to them from heaven, dressed in white clothes." After having kept on for a while in this way, abusing Mr. Cowdery, he [attorney for the defendant] began to argue the case to the jury; but all interest was shifted from the prisoner and his case and directed towards Oliver Cowdery; everybody was wondering in what manner he would reply to the accusation just made. The people did not believe, or know before this that they had elected a County prosecutor

14. My transcription has been taken from a typed copy of the original affidavit.

who had been an associate of the Mormon Prophet, Joseph Smith. Finally when the defendant's attorney had completed his argument, Oliver Cowdery's turn came to reply, and everybody in the Court room strained their necks to catch a glimpse of Mr. Cowdery. He arose as calm as a summer morning, and in a low but clear voice which gradually rose in pitch and volume as he proceeded, said: "If your honor please, and gentlemen of the jury, the attorney on the opposite side has challenged me to state my connection with Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon; and as I cannot now avoid the responsibility, I must admit to you that I am the very Oliver Cowdery whose name is attached to the testimony with others as to the appearance of the Angel Moroni; and let me tell you that it is not because of my good deeds that I am here, away from the body of the Mormon Church, but because I have broken the covenants I once made, and I was cut off from the Church, but gentlemen of the jury, I have never denied my testimony, which is attached to the front page of the Book of Mormon, and I declare to you here that these eyes saw the Angel, and these ears of mine heard the voice of the Angel, and he told us his [p. 2] name was Moroni; that the book was true, and contained the fullness of the gospel, and we were also told that if we ever denied what we heard and seen that there would be no forgiveness for us, neither in this world nor in the world to come.["]

Mr. Barrington, whose other name I cannot now remember, told me a great deal more, but this was the most important. I will also state that Mr. Barrington was a highly respected and very prominent man, and a citizen of the County and State where he resided; and he stated that what he heard from Oliver Cowdery on that occasion had made such an impression upon his mind that he had never been able to forget it. As nearly as he could remember this incident occurred in the early [18]40's—1840-45; and further deponent saith not.

(Signed) C. M. Nielsen

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 3 day of December 1909.

A. A. Duncan,[15]
Notary Public.

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15. Adam A. Duncan (1874-1946), born in Salt Lake City, was a prominent attorney. He died in Salt Lake City, Utah (see *Salt Lake City Directory* [1910], 355; Duncan Family Group Record, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah; [Obituary], *Deseret News,* 17 June 1946, 8).

[7. *Charles M. Nielsen Address, 1910*]

... In the year 1884 I was traveling as a missionary in Minnesota. I had most of the eastern part of the state to myself. I was without purse or scrip and one night slept in a hay stack: Next day I came to a city and wandered up and down the streets. I had no money, no friends and didn't know where to go. I passed a large store called the Emporium, something like our Z.C.M.I. I was attracted by it, but didn't know why. There were about 25 teams hitched near the place, owned by farmers in town on business. Some thing told me to "Go over and see a certain man." The street was full of people and I wondered which man. Then one man seemed to me as big as three ordinary men. The spirit whispered: "Go over and speak to him!" I hesitated to approach this entire stranger, but the same voice came to me a second and a third time. Then I went.

He was a prosperous looking farmer with a fine two-seated buggy, which he was ready to enter, and was a prominent man, I afterwards learned. Not knowing what else, I said: "How far are you going?" "Home; where are you going?" "I have no certain place; I am from Utah." "You are not a Mormon, are you?" he asked, anxiously. "Yes." "Then God bless you!" he replied, reaching out his arms and dropping the lines. "Get into this buggy as fast as you can. When we get home, my wife will rejoice as I rejoice now. I will then explain all. But you are not one of these make-believers are you?" "No, I'm a real live Mormon from Utah."

Reaching the home, he called, "Mother, here's a real live Mormon elder." I'm afraid I didn't look very fine, as I had slept in a haystack the previous night. They took me by the hand and led me into the house. I was very hungry and begged for something to eat. After my hunger was satisfied, they called in their sons and daughters and we sat around the table. My new found friend then said:

"Now, young man, you thought it strange how I acted when you spoke to me. When I get through you will realize the importance of your coming to us. When I was 21 years of age I was working my father's farm in Mich[p. 162]igan. I had worked hard on the farm that summer and decided to take a day off, so [I] went to the city. Near the courthouse I saw a great many people assembling and others walking that way, so I went over to see what was up. There was a jam in the courtroom, but being young and strong, I pushed my way close up to the center, where I found the prosecuting attorney addressing the court and jury in a murder trial. The prosecuting attorney was Oliver Cowdery, and he was giving his opening address in behalf of the state." (After he was cut off from the Church, Oliver Cowdery studied law, practicing in Ohio, Wisconsin and then Michigan, where he

was elected prosecuting attorney.) After Cowdery sat down the attorney representing the prisoner arose and with taunting sarcasm said: "May it please the court and gentlemen of the jury, I see one Oliver Cowdery is going to reply to my argument. I wish he would tell us something about the Mormon Bible; something about that golden Bible that Joe Smith dug out of the hill; something about the great fraud he perpetrated upon the American people whereby he gained thousands of dollars. Now he seems to know so much about this poor prisoner, I wonder if he has forgotten all about Joe Smith and his connection with him." The speaker all the while sneering and pointing his finger in scorn at Cowdery in the hope of making him ridiculous before the court and jury.

Everybody present began to wonder if they had been guilty of making such a mistake as choosing a Mormon for prosecuting attorney. Even the judge on the bench began looking with suspicion and distrust at the prosecuting attorney. The prisoner and his attorney became elated at the effect of the speech. People began asking, "Is he a Mormon?" Everybody wondered what Cowdery would say against such foul charges.

Finally Oliver Cowdery arose, calm as a summer morning. I was within three feet of him. There was no hesitation, no fear, no anger in his voice, as he said: "May it please the court, and gentlemen of the jury, my brother attorney on the other side has charged me with connection with Joseph Smith and the golden Bible. The responsibility has been placed upon me, and I cannot escape reply. (If he had denied it before, why not deny it now?) Before God and man I dare not deny what I have said, and what my testimony contains and as written and printed on the front page of the Book of Mormon. May it please your honor and gentlemen of the jury, this I say, I saw the angel and heard his voice—how can I deny it? It happened in the day time when the sun was shining bright in the firmament; not in the night when I was asleep. That glorious messenger from heaven, dressed in white, standing above the ground, in a glory I have never seen anything to compare, with the sun insignificant in comparison, and these personages told us if we denied that testimony there is no forgiveness in this life nor in the world to come. Now how can I deny it—I dare not; I will not!"

The man who related this to me was a prominent man in that state; he was a rich man, a man who has held offices of trust from the people—a man of respect, one when you look into his face you will not doubt. To strengthen his statement this man, who knew nothing of "Mormon" history, said Oliver Cowdery mentioned something he wanted me to explain; that the angel took back a part that was not translated. We [p. 163] know this and that part of the golden plates then withheld will be revealed at some fututre [future] time.

"Since I heard Oliver Cowdery speak," continued my host, "I have not had peace for these many years. I want to know more about your people. I felt when I listened to Oliver Cowdery talking in the courtroom he was more than an ordinary man. If you can show us that you have what Oliver Cowdery testified to, we shall all be glad to receive it."

He and his whole family embraced the Gospel and came to Utah. ...

[*8. Charles M. Nielsen Autobiography, circa 1911*][16]

"Found a Man who Heard Oliver Cowdry"

In my travels towards Wisconsin through Minnesota, I had to pass through a large city (I am sorry I have forgotten its name) as I had no money and began to feel hungry, I was trying to hurry through the city as I was afraid to ask for food in the city as that was against the city ordinance, I had been told before and a person would be arrested if he were found begging for food.

"Like Unto Phillip of Old, The Sp[i]rit Spoke to Me"

As I was hurrying through the city so as to get out among the farmers before I dared to ask for a meal, and while walking on the crowded sidewalk, a voice spoke to me to hurry and go across the street to the other side and speak to the man that was about to get into his surry. I looked around several times to see who was speaking to me for it was so plain, but no one there, and then again the voice said to hurry over before he leaves, and so I did without understanding at that time that it was God's spirit that spoke to me and coming over to the man who was just about to enter his surry but when I spoke to him first in a general way, he then spoke to me and asked if I was looking for someone and said maybe he could help me as he was very well acquainted in the city. I then spoke up and said to him, "I am a servant of the Lord sent to preach His Gospel, and was looking for someone who would listen to my testimony." [p. 38] "Well," he said, "you have a big job on your hand young man. What church do you represent?" "Well, when I tell you the Church I belong to, I guess you will get mad at me like they do around here." "No, I don't care what church it is for I do not belong to any Church, you just tell me." "Well," I said, "I am a Mormon Elder from Utah" and then he dropped the lines he held in his hands, just before going into his surry, and he was about to embrace me, and said, "You are the very man I

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16. The original Autobiography is typed with some penciled corrections.

have been looking for, for the last forty years. Just get into my surry and when we get home, I will tell you all about it." And it did not take me long to get into the surry, I thought, this is God's work to help me.

"Hearing Oliver Cowdry"

Coming home to my new friend, he called to his wife to come and take care of this man, for he had captured a live Mormon Elder and his wife laughed and told me to follow her into the house for when her husband had put his horses away he would soon be in and talk, just sit down. So when the husband came in, he said "I will now tell my story, how it was that I was so glad to meet you. One day I told my father while we lived in Michigan that I wanted to take a day off and go up town."

"Coming to the center of the large city I noticed so many people going into the court house so I thought it must be something interesting, so I ~~concluded~~ <decided> to go too. Coming into the court room it was packed with people like sardines in a can, and a young man was then speaking to the jury. It happened to be a murder case and a friend that stood by me said, "The young lawyer who is speaking now is Oliver Cowdry, the prosecuting attorney." [p. 39] Of course I had never heard the name Oliver Cowdry before. So when the prosecuting attorney Oliver Cowdry finished his opening address to the jury, he sat down and the lawyer representing the prisoner arose and in a sarcastic way addressed himself to Oliver Cowdry, saying, "I do hope when you shall reply to my address that you will tell us something about the Angel that came down in his night clothes to you and Joseph Smith and about the tin plates you and Joseph Smith dug out of the Cumorah Hill, by which you and Joe Smith have fooled so many of our country people to believe were from heaven.["] My friend whose name was Robert Barrington said to me that if a bomb had exploded in the courtroom he did not think ti [it] would have created more escitement for none of us thought that we had elected a man to be prosecuting attorney who had been with Joseph Smith, and they, including myself, were just waiting for the prosecuting attorney to talk, for we could not understand what that poor fellow would say, if the statement the other attorney had mentioned was true. And so when the attorney for the prisioner stopped, Oliver Cowdry arose and in a calm manner said, without being ~~mad~~ <angry> or excited, "I wish I could be excused from replying to the lawyer for the prisoner but I cannot. Yes, I saw the angel come down from heaven. He was not dressed in night clothes, he had on a beautiful white garment and a white robe hanging over his shoulders. It was in the daytime, it was between one and two

o'clock in the afternoon[17] and the angel said to us that the "Book of Mormon" was correctly translated and contained the Gospel of Christ. That is all I care to say." After the court adjourned and coming outside, my friend Barrington tried to get a chance to speak to Mr. Cowdry but another man ahead of him said, "Mr. [p. 40] Cowdry, do not expect us to believe that trash you told us in the court." ["]No," said Mr. Cowdry, ["]I do not believe it, I know it, for I was there." and the other man backed away, saying nothing more, but I could not get to talk to Mr. Cowdry." ...[18]

I started in to preach to the whole family of Mr. Barrington and I baptised them all sometime afterwards, and this [p. 41] family, may the Lord bless them for their goodness to me a humble missionary, traveling without purse or script, for they afterwards gave me enough money to buy me some clothing I needed badly. They later sold their farm in Minnesota and went to Utah or Idaho. ...

[*9. Charles M. Nielsen Testimony, Circa 1914*][19]

About the latter part of April 1883 I was appointed by the mission president to proceed alone, as there were very few elders in the mission at that time, and travel through Minnesota towards La Cross, Wisconsin and of course tracting and holding meetings as much as I was able to obtain opportunities to do. I was traveling entirely without purse or scrip and the Lord very well provided for me—I never went a whole day without something to eat and a place to sleep at night, although I was a stranger in a strange country. On my travels toward Wisconsin, as I had been directed by the mission president, I came into a large city. I was walking through the city on a sidewalk opposite a large department store something similar to the size of the Z.C.M.I. There were quite a number of surreys and buggies stand=ing opposite from the sidewalk where I was walking, the horses being tied to a large iron pole running along the gutter while the people were inside the store making purchases. While walking there a voice spoke to me as plainly as any person could do that was

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17. According to David Whitmer, the vision occurred about 11 a.m. (VI.A.5, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH EDWARD STEVENSON, 22-23 DEC 1877).

18. At this point, Barrington tells a story unrelated to the present subject.

19. It is uncertain if this 4-page typed document is an original or a copy.

standing behind me, saying: "Brother Nielsen, go across the street and talk to that man who is now about to enter his surrey." And I turned around several times to see who was talking to me, but there was no one there. And the voice came again, only a little stronger, to go across the street. And so I went as fast as I could and arriving opposite from where I had been standing across the street, the man, a well-to-do farmer, was then about to enter his surrey. I took my hat off and said, how-do-you-do. "Well," said he, "are you looking for somebody?" I said, "I am a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, sent to preach His gospel and I am looking for some friends that will listen to my testimony." "Well," said he, "that is quite an important business you are engaged in, young man. By the way, what church do you represent?" I said, "if I tell you what church I represent I guess you will hate me like many of the people do around here when they hear what church I represent." "Well," he said, "what is your name?" I said, my name is Charles M. Nielsen. "And where do you come from?" I said, "I am a Mormon Elder from Utah representing the [p. 1] Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly called 'Mormons.'" "Well, well," said he, reaching out his arms, "young man, get into that surrey as fast as you can. I have been looking for a man like you for the last forty years and when I get home I will tell you the reason why." And it did not take me long to get into the surrey because I thought there would be a chance to get a dinner or something to eat, as I was very hungry at the time. Coming home to the farm I learned, as he had told me before, that his name was Robert Barrington. He called to his wife. "Mother," he said, "I have captured a live Mormon Elder from Utah. Take him into the house until I get the horses put away and I will come in and have a conversation with him."

As soon as Mr. Barrington came in he said to me: "I will now tell you why I was so pleased to meet you. When I was about or a little over twenty years of age I went up into the city on some business and I noticed that there were many people going into the court-house. I thought there must be something very interesting going on there, since so many people were going in. And of course being a young man and very inquisitive I decided to go also. The large room in which the court was held was packed with people, like sardines in a box. I learned that there was a murder trial going on before the court and a young, or middle-aged man, was addressing the jury. I learned from a friend of mine that that was the district attorney, Oliver Cowdery, who was making his opening argument to the jury. As soon as he had finished his opening argument the attorney for the prisoner arose and in a very sarcastic manner, looking towards where Oliver Cowdery was sitting, after

having first addressed the court and jury said: 'Mr. Cowdery, when you shall reply to my argument I wish you would tell something about that angel that was coming down from heaven in his night-clothes, speaking to you and Joe Smith; and also something about those tin plates that you and Joe Smith dug out of the Cumorah Hill, which you have printed into a book and by which you have defrauded so many of our country-men. It might interest the court and jury to hear something about that.' After he had finally [p. 2] finished his argument in defense of the prisoner he sat down. Every eye in the crowded court-room turned to Oliver Cowdery. The people almost strained their necks to get a look at him. They could not believe that they had made such a mistake in electing a prosecuting attorney that had been connected with the false Mormon prophet, Joseph Smith.

"Oliver Cowdery arose, as calm as a summer morn[ing] and said: 'May it please the court, gentlemen of the jury, I wish that I could escape replying to my brother-attorney, but I dare not. The angel who appeared was not dressed in his night-clothes—he had on a beautiful white garment and a beautiful white robe swung over his shoulders and he stood a few feet from the ground. He said to us, there being three of us present, among other things, that if we ever denied what we there saw and heard there would be no forgiveness for us in this life.' And he told us that the Book of Mormon had been correctly translated and contained the true gospel of Jesus Christ. 'This vision, or revelation, or whatever you might call it was in the day time; it was not in a dream in the night, for it happened sometime between twelve and two o'clock. The glory that surrounded his person that spoke to us sur=passed entirely the splendor of the sun, which was also shining very beautifully. I am not now with the Mormon Church; I left it several years ago, but I have never denied what I there saw and heard. This is all the answer I care to give to my opponent.'"

Mr. Barrington said that the impression made upon his young mind from hearing Oliver Cowdery had never left him and he always had been anxious to learn more about the matter. But he had never been able to meet anyone who could tell him until now. ... [p. 3] ...[20] ["]And now I am glad that you are here and my wife and I and our family will now listen to what you have to tell us."

By that time I had forgotten that I was awfully hungry. I started in to bear my testimony to them and after returning to them about twice more on my travels, I baptized the whole family and I feel very grateful to the Lord

20. At this point in Nielsen's narrative, Barrington tells a story unrelated to the present subject.

for the experience that I had and for the goodness of this family to me, a humble missionary.

[*10. Seymour B. Young Account, 1921*]

... He [Oliver Cowdery] had left the Church some years after and had engaged in the practice of law. On one occasion an opposing counsel said: "How can you listen to a man who has proclaimed that he is a follower of Joseph Smith, the 'Mormon' Prophet? How can you accept of his testimony, when he is far off in his calculations of things that occurred in a most natural way, and he looks at things from a spiritual standpoint, so he claims, and was at one time an associate of Joseph Smith, the 'Mormon' Prophet, and received a revelation, so he states, from the Lord?" Oliver Cowdery, after the gentleman had exhausted his tirade of ridicule, arose to his feet and said: "May it please your honor, I was once a member of the 'Mormon' Church. I was associated with the Prophet Joseph Smith, but through my own weakness, I have been disfellowshiped by that people, and I am sorry that this ever occurred." And with tears streaming down his face, he declared that if the opportunity ever presented itself, he would again ally himself with the "Mormon" Church. ...[21]

[*11. Charles M. Nielsen Affidavit, 24 January 1935*][22]

United States of America
County of Salt Lake, | ss.
State of Utah

Charles M Nielsen being first duly sworn according to law; deposes and says:

I was traveling in the State of Minnesota, in the city of Hastings, which was a very large city, I was without means, as I was traveling

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21. Concerning Young's statement, Richard L. Anderson observes: "Seymour B. Young was only eleven years of age when Cowdery returned to the Church but remembered meeting him personally then at the home of Phineas [Young] at Kanesville. ... Unquestionably such traditions in the Young family were based on direct contact with Cowdery when he was still alive, perhaps at his return [to the church]" (R. L. Anderson 1981, 59). Seymour B. Young (1837-1924), son of Joseph and Jane (Bicknell) Young, was born in Kirtland, Ohio. In October 1877 he was called to the First Quorum of Seventy (Jenson 1971, 1:200-202).

22. The original is a typed and signed document.

without purse or scrip. I was walking up and down on a street called Main Street. There were a great many people traveling up and down on both sides of the Street, and while standing for a few moments looking across the street towards a large mercantile institution, in front of which was a number of horses tied up to their buggies and surries, while the people were inside making their purchases, and while I stood there wondering what I should do or where I should go, a voice said to me, as plain as I have ever heard anything whispering to me, to go across the street and speak to the man who was about to enter into his surry. I looked over and saw the man plainly among a great many other buggies and I rather hesitated and the voice came again in rapid succession twice, and without a moment's hesitation I went across and got there just as he was about to enter his surry. ~~and after having~~ <I> addressed him and told him my business was a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, <and was> hunting for some one who would receive my message. He answered "That ~~was~~ <is> a remarkable business, young man, what Church do you belong to". I told him if I were to tell him what Church I belonged to I guess ~~you will~~ <he would> tell me to go to hell. "No," he said, "I don't give a damn for any of the churches; I don't belong to any church." "Well, I tell you I am a Mormon Elder from Utah." "Well", he said, "is that really true." Said I, "I can show you my letter [p. 1] of appointment." He said, "Well you don't belong to the Josephite church, do you?" I said no. "Well," he said, "I don't care for them. I have been looking for a man like you for the last forty years and I will tell you the reason why. Just get into my surry and I will take you home. I gues you have no other place to go." "No," I said. And he took me to his home near the city and his wife came out to meet him.

Said he to his wife, "Take care of this young man. I have captured a live Mormon Elder, and after I have put my horses away I will come in and tell you my pleasure at meeting you." To this his wife said: <alright, come in, young man.>

After putting up the horses and coming into the house, he said: (His name was Robert Barrington and was a well ~~today~~ to do farmer.) as far as I can recall his exact words.

"One day, some forty years ago, when I was about twenty years of age, I asked my father if I could go up into town, we were then living in the State of Michigan, to have a half day off from work to rest from my labor, and comeing into the city I noticed a good many people walking up to the court house and I thought there must be something exciting going on, and I

followed the crowd into the court room. The court house was crowded and the jury was in the box and I saw the Judges on the bench. I was informed that there was a murder trial going on and the young man who was addressing the jury in the opening statement to the Jury was Oliver Cowdery, and as soon as he had finished his opening [p. 2] statement, the attorney for the defendant who was charged with murder, arose, and after having addressed the court and the jury in the usual way, he turned half way around so as to face Oliver Cowdery who was sitting close by, and turning loose on him, in a very sarcastic manner, he said: 'I hope, Mr. Cowdery, that when you are going to reply to my cross argument to the jury that you will tell us something about the angel who came down in his night clothes while you and Joe Smith were digging golden plates out of Cumorah hill, by which you have deluded so many thousands of our countrymen, by deceiving them in regard to the coming forth of a certain book called the Book of Mormon." I can not tell you of the impressions that the statement of the defendents' attorney made upon the large crowd who had gathered into the room to hear the closing argument in this murder case. It was like a thunder bolt from a clear sky which had broke into the court room. No one supposed that the people of Michigan had made such an awful mistake as to elect one to the office of prosecuting attorney who had been with that great impostor Joe Smith. Finally Oliver Cowdery's turn came to reply. I shall never forget how his face looked no matter how long I shall live. He was as calm as a summer morning. There was no anger in his face or his words. In addressing the court and the jury he said:

"Oh, I do wish that I could escape replying to the challenge of my brother Attorney representing the defendant in this case, but I can not. I dare not. The angel that appeared to us was not a dream. It was not in the night time. It was in the day time while the sun was shining brightly on a clear beautiful day. We were praying in turn as we were kneeling on the ground and while in the attitude of prayer, a brilliant light surrounded us, the glory [p. 3] of which I can not describe. It even surpassed the brilliancy of the sun. A beautiful personage stood before us about two feet from the ground and he told us that his name was Moroni and he declared to us that the Book of Mormon had been translated by the gift and power of God and he commanded us to bear witness of the fact, and he said, "If you ever deny what you have seen and heard here from me today, there is no forgiveness for you in this life nor in the life to come."

"That happened some forty years ago and I have ever since been anxious to meet a Mormon Elder that I could learn more concerning Mormonism, because no living soul could very well deny the sincerity by which he was

replying to these questions that were given by the attorney for the defendant." [p. 4] ...

I stayed with the family of Mr. Barrington for about a week, preaching the gospel to them and before I left I baptized Mr. Barrington and the whole family. They emigrated to <Idaho> and died <members>

[s] Charles M. Nielsen.

STATE OF UTAH
| ss
COUNTY OF SALT LAKE

On the 24th day of January, 1935, personally appeared before me C. M. Nielsen, who duly acknowledges to me that the above statement is true of his own knowledge.

[s] Adam A. Duncan
Notary Public

I reside at Salt Lake City, Utah
My commission expires June 24, 1936

15.
OLIVER COWDERY TO PHINEAS H. YOUNG, 23 MARCH 1846

Oliver Cowdery to Phineas H. Young, 23 March 1846, Oliver Cowdery Papers, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Phineas Howe Young (1799-1879), brother of Brigham Young, was Oliver Cowdery's brother-in-law, having married Cowdery's half-sister Lucy.[1] In the present letter, dated 23 March 1846, Tiffin, Ohio, Cowdery alludes to his and Joseph Smith's reception of two priesthoods and reminisces about the organization of the church.[2] Written in Cowdery's own hand, the four-page letter is addressed to "P. H. Young, Esq. / Nauvoo, / Hancock County / Illinois."

Tiffin, Seneca County, Ohio.
March 23, 1846.

Dear brother Phinehas:

... But from your last [letter], I am fully satisfied, that no unjust imputation will be suffered to remain upon my character. And that I may not be misunder=stood, let me here say that I have only sought, and only asked, that my character might stand exonerated from those charges which imputed to me the crimes of theft, forgery, &c.[3] Those which all my former associates knew to be false. I do not, I have never asked, to be excused, or exempted from an acknowledgement, of my actual fault or wrong—for of these there are many; which it always was my pleasure to confess. I have [p. 1] cherished a hope, and that one of my fondest, that I might leave such a character as those who might believe in my testimony, after I should be called hence,

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1. On Young, see introduction to III.K.23, PHINEAS HOWE YOUNG AUTOBIOGRAPHY, 1863.

2. The entire letter was published in Alonzo A. Hinckley, *General Conference Report* (April 1934), 128-29; and Gunn 1962, 250-51.

3. On the charges against Cowdery and his excommunication, see J. Smith 1948, 3:16-18.

might do so, not only for the sake of the truth, but might not blush for the private char=acter of the man who bore that testimony. I have been sensitive on this subject, I admit; but I ought to be so—you would be, under the circumstances, had you stood in the presence of John, ~~and~~ <with> our departed brother Joseph, to receive the Lesser Priesthood—and in the presence <of> Peter, to receive the Greater, and looked down through time, and witnessed the effects these two must produce,—you would feel what you have never felt, were wicked men conspiring to lessen the effects of your testimony on man, after you should have gone to your long sought rest. But, enough—enough, of this. ... [p. 2]

You say you are to have a meeting on the 6th of April. Brother Phinehas, I could be with you, and tell you about the 6th of April, 1830, when but six mem=bers only belonged to the Church, and how we looked forward to a future. I should gladly, but I cannot—only in spirit—but in spirit I shall be with you. ...

May the Lord God of our fathers bless you and yours, and the Church as a body. Such is my prayer—such is my heart.

I am yours in the New and everlasting Covenant.

[s] Oliver Cowdery.

Elder P. H. Young

16.
OLIVER COWDERY
COUNCIL BLUFFS (IA) TESTIMONY,
21 OCTOBER 1848

1. Reuben Miller, Journal, 21 October 1848, 1:[12-15], LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

2. Reuben Miller, "Last Days of Oliver Cowdery," *Deseret News* 9 (13 April 1859). Reprinted in *Millennial Star* 21 (1859): 544-46.

3. William M. Frampton to John E. Booth, 15 September 1901, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

EDITORIAL NOTE

At a special LDS church conference held on 21 October 1848 at Council Bluffs, Iowa, and presided over by Apostle Orson Hyde, Oliver Cowdery spoke to the congregation expressing his desire for rebaptism. Cowdery's remarks were noted by Reuben Miller[1] in his journal. When Miller's account was published in the *Deseret News* in 1859, the editors remarked: "Br. Reuben Miller, now Bishop of Mill Creek Ward, was also present at the time and noted what he [Cowdery] said and has furnished us what he believes to be a verbatim report of his remarks." Both Miller's journal entry and published version have been included below (see also R. L. Anderson 1968; and Kirkham 1951, 1:72-73). Also included below is the reminiscence of William M. Frampton,[2] who remembered hearing Cowdery's statements at Council Bluffs. Unfortunately, Frampton's late recollec-

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1. Reuben Miller (1811-82) was born at Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania. He was converted to Mormonism in Illinois and baptized in 1843. After a brief association with the Strangites in 1846, Miller rejoined the LDS church on 19 October 1846. He immigrated to Utah in 1849 and settled in Mill Creek, Salt Lake County, where he served as bishop from 1850 until his death. He was the husband of four wives, and the father of thirty children (Jenson 1971, 3:166-67).

2. William Martindale Frampton (1831-1906) was born in Scioto County, Ohio. He was baptized in 1841 (Cemetery Records, Pleasant Grove, Utah County, Utah, 1:187, Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah).

tion was influenced by the published version of Miller's account.

[*1. Reuben Miller Journal, 21 October 1848*]

Conference held on Mis=queto creek Council Bluffs Octo=ber 21st 1848

Remarks of Bro oliver Cow=dery

"Friends and brethren my name is Cowdrey, oliver Cowdery. In the early history of this church I stood Identified with her. And [was] one in her councils. ... I wrote with my own pen the entire book of Mormon (save a few pages) as it fell from the lips of the prophet [Joseph Smith], As he trans=lated <it> by the gift and power [p.12] of god, By [the] means of the urim and thummim, or as it is called by that book ["]holy Interpreters."[3] I beheld with my eyes. And handled with my ha=nds the gold plates from which it was translated.[4] I also beheld the Interpreters. That book is true. Sidney Rigdon[5] did not write it, Mr. [Solomon] Spaulding did not write it. I wrote it myself as it fell from the Lips of the pro=phet. ... [p. 13] I was present with Joseph when an holy angle [angel] from god came down from heaven and confered or restored the Aronic priesthood, And said at the same time that it should remain upon the earth while the earth stands. I was also present with Joseph when the Melchis=ideck priesthood was confered by the holy angles [angels] of god—<this was the more [-] and in order that> which we then confirmed on each other by the will and com=mandment of god. This [p. 14] priesthood is also to remain upon the earth untill the Last remnant of time.[6] This holy priesthood we confered upon many, And is just as good and valid as if god had ~~done~~ <conferred> it in person. I laid my hands upon this man [Orson Hyde][7]. yes I laid my right hand

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3. Mos. 8:13, 19, 28:20; Alma 37:21, 24; Eth. 4:5.

4. It is not clearly stated, but Cowdery's experience of seeing and handling the plates, like Martin Harris's experience, were probably separate events. Cowdery saw the plates in vision, but handled them only when covered (cf. "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection").

5. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

6. George A. Smith gave slightly different wording: "This people have the true and holy Priesthood; 'for the angel said unto Joseph Smith, Jr., in my hearing, that this Priesthood shall remain on the earth unto the end'" (*Millennial Star* 11 [1 February 1849]: 14).

7. On Orson Hyde (1805-78), see introduction to I.A.18, ORSON HYDE ACCOUNT, 1842.

upon his head (Pointing to Bro Hyde) And I conferred upon him this priesthood, And he hold[s] that priesthood now. He was also c[a]lled through me <by the prayer of faith> an apostle of the Lord Jesus christ

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[*2. Reuben Miller Account, 1859*]

FRIENDS AND BRETHREN:—

My name is Cowdery, Oliver Cowdery. In the early history of this Church I stood identified with her, and one in her councils. True it is that the gifts and callings of God are without repentance; not because I was better than the rest of mankind was I called; but, to fulfill the purposes of God, he called me to a high and holy calling.

I wrote, with my own pen, the entire Book of Mormon (save a few pages) as it fell from the lips of the Prophet Joseph Smith, as he translated it by the gift and power of God, by the means of the Urim and Thummim, or, as it is called by that book, "Holy Interpreters." I beheld with my eyes, and handled with my hands, the gold plates from which it was transcribed. I also saw with my eyes and handled with my hands the "holy interpreters."[8] That book is *true*. Sidney Rigdon did not write it; Mr. Spaulding did not write it. I wrote it myself, as it fell from the lips of the Prophet. It contains the everlasting gospel, and came forth to the children of men in fulfillment of the revelations of John, where he says he saw an angel come, with the everlasting gospel to preach to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people [Rev. 14:6-7]. It contains principles of salvation; and if you, my hearers, will walk by its light and obey its precepts, you will be saved with an everlasting salvation in the kingdom of God on high. Brother Hyde has just said that it is very important that we keep and walk in the true channel, in order to avoid the sand bars. This is true. The channel is here. The Holy Priesthood is here.

I was present with Joseph when an holy angel from God came down from heaven and conferred on us, or restored, the lesser or Aaronic Priesthood, and said to us, at the same time, that it should remain upon the earth while the earth stands.

I was also present with Joseph when the higher or Melchisedek Priesthood was conferred by the holy angel[9] from on high. This Priesthood we then conferred on each other, by the will and commandment of God.

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8. Note that Miller's journal entry does not mention handling the interpreters, only seeing them.

9. The singular "angel" here is a printing error since Miller's journal has the plural "angels."

This Priesthood, as was then declared, is also to remain upon the earth until the last remnant of time. This Holy Priesthood, or authority, we then conferred upon many, and is just as good and valid as though God had done it in person. ...

[*3. William M. Frampton Letter, 15 September 1901*][10]

Pleasant Grove [Utah], Sept. 15th, 1901.

John E. Booth,

Dear Brother:—

To-day I thought I would try and fulfill my promise to you Though I cannot make the words tell with you as they fell with burning force upon my ears. I was then a young man, shared with the Saints in their Exodus from Nauvoo, had heard many testimonies borne, but never did they sound as did Oliver Cowdery's at a conference held at Gainsville Iowa 1848, Elder Hyde presiding, I was directly opposite the speakers stand so as to see and hear distinctly all that was said. Elder Hyde took Oliver by the hand and led him to the front and said, "Brethren I take Pleasure in introducing you to Bro. Oliver Cowdery," This produced quite a sensation, Brother Cowdery looked upon the people for a short time without speaking, his manner caused deep attention[,] then in a distinct and very impressive voice, said "My name is Cowdery, Oliver Cowdery, in an early day I was identified with this Church in her councils, I wrote the Book Of Mormon, Spaulding did not write it, Sidney Rigdon did not write it, I wrote it (with the exception of a few pages) with this right hand, (extending his hand) as the inspired words fell from the lips of Joseph Smith, Joseph Smith was a Prophet of God, and his mission will prove a savior of life unto life[,] or death unto death unto this generation! I received the Priesthood in connection with Joseph Smith from the hands of the Angel, I conversed with the Angel as one man converses with another. He laid his hand on my head, and later with Joseph received the Melchisedeck Priesthood, I confered the Apostleship on that

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10. The letter is a typed copy of the original (with a few corrections in ink), prepared and signed by John E. Booth, the letter's recipient. Booth (1847-1920) was born at Bedfordleigh, Lancashire, England. He was baptized in 1857 and immigrated the same year to Utah. He was a miller and school teacher. He also practiced law in Provo, Utah. He served several missions for the church, and twice presided over the Northern States Mission, 1883-84 and 1889-90. He died at Provo (Jenson 1971, 1:494, 4:362; Bitton 1977, 35).

man, pointing to Elder Hyde, Some have said I Apostatized, I never did Apostatize I simply stoped, the man that was in my way is now gone.[11] I wish to bear my testimony to Joseph's mission and of the Latter day work. This Gospel is true and will prove a savior of life unto us if we are faithful, I do not ask for any position only wish to be identified with this People.<"> Many other things were said I do not remember, but what I have penned made a lasting impression on my mind, the man Oliver referred to as "gone" was Sidney Rigdon, Please excuse my tardiness and accept my kind regards,

Your Brother in the Gospel,
William M. Frampton.

This certifies that the foregoing is a full true and correct copy of the original letter which letter is now in my possession.

[s] J. E. Booth.

11. Perhaps a reference to Sidney Rigdon (see below).

17.
OLIVER COWDERY TESTIMONY, 13 JANUARY 1849

Oliver Cowdery, Statement to Samuel W. Richards, 13 January 1849, "Oliver Cowdery's Last Letter," *Deseret Evening News* 17 (22 March 1884). Reprinted in *Improvement Era* 2 (December 1898): 95-96; 17 (October 1914): 1168.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Samuel Whitney Richards (1824-1909) was born at Richmond, Berkshire County, Massachusetts. He was baptized in 1838. In 1842 he moved with his parents to Nauvoo, Illinois. After returning from a mission in Great Britain in 1848, he resided in eastern Missouri briefly before moving to Utah in 1849. From 1852 to 1854 and from 1857 to 1858, Richards served as president of the European Mission, during which time he edited the *Millennial Star*. He also served as president of the Eastern States Mission from 1895 to 1897 (Jenson 1971, 1:718-19, 4:318, 332).

In January 1849 Oliver Cowdery visited Richards at his home in Missouri and penned the present statement.[1] When Cowdery's statement was published in the *Deseret Evening News* on 22 March 1884, Richards explained the circumstances of the writing of Cowdery's testimony:

> I take the liberty to hand you the accompanying communication, written by Oliver Cowdery, as a direct testimony of the facts therein set forth to myself personally, at the time indicated by the date affixed. At that time he, with his family, was spending a few days with me at my then residence in Missouri, as he was on his way to visit David Whitmer and family in Richmond, Mo., prior to his contemplated departure for Salt Lake City, that coming spring to spend the reminder of his days with and in laboring for the Church. As he was about to take his leave, after several days of most interesting and familiar conversation with me, he penned, with his own hand and in my presence, the testimony and statement herewith, which I deem worthy of record (Samuel W. Richards to Editor, 21 March 1884,

1. For an account of Cowdery's visit with Richards, see III.G.18, OLIVER COWDERY INTERVIEW WITH SAMUEL W. RICHARDS, JAN 1849.

Deseret Evening News, 22 March 1884).

While darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people [Isa. 60:2]; long after the authority to administer in holy things had been taken away, the Lord opened the heavens and sent forth his word for the salvation of Israel. In fulfillment of the sacred Scripture [Rev. 14:6] the everlasting Gospel was proclaimed by the mighty angel, (Moroni) who, clothed with the authority of his mission, gave glory to God in the highest. This Gospel is the "stone taken from the mountain without hands [Dan. 2:45]." John the Baptist, holding the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood; Peter, James and John, holding the keys of the Melchisedek Priesthood, have also ministered for those who shall be heirs of salvation, and with these ministrations ordained men to the same Priesthoods. These Priesthoods, with their authority, are now, and must continue to be, in the body of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Blessed is the Elder who has received the same, and thrice blessed and holy is he who shall endure to the end. Accept assurances, dear Brother, of the unfeigned prayer of him, who, in connection with Joseph the Seer, was blessed with the above ministrations, and who earnestly and devoutly hopes to meet you in the celestial glory.

OLIVER COWDERY.

To Elder Samuel W. Richards,
January 13th, 1849.

18.
OLIVER COWDERY INTERVIEW WITH SAMUEL W. RICHARDS, JANUARY 1849

Samuel W. Richards, Statement, 21 May 1907, Samuel W. Richards Papers, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

EDITORIAL NOTE

On his way to Richmond, Missouri, in January 1849, Oliver Cowdery and his wife, Elizabeth, visited Samuel W. Richards at his home at Winter Quarters (now Florence, Nebraska). The following document is Richards's late reminiscence of his interview with Cowdery about early Mormon history (see also III.G.17, OLIVER COWDERY TESTIMONY, 13 JAN 1849). The four-page document is written and signed by Samuel W. Richards. An almost identical typewritten and signed copy, dated 25 May 1907, is also located in the LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Box 1228. *Salt Lake City, Utah,* May 21/[19]07 *189[blank]* [1]

By Samuel Whitney Richards.

Returning from my first European Mission in the fall of 1848, I found my wife[2] in the neighbor=hood of Winter Quarters,[3] having gone that far from Nauvoo where I had left her in the spring of 1846 on her way to the Mountains, whither the Saints were now gathering to for a resting place. They were being driven from Nauvoo, their third resting place, having made their appeal to the President of the United States for redress of grievences and wrongs endured and receiving from him the response,—Your cause is just, but I can do nothing for you! which determined the Prophet Joseph Smith, as the leader of the people, to take them to the Rocky Mountains from under the jurisdiction of the American Flag, and settle <upon> as it then was, Mexican Territory.

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1. The italicized material represents Richards's printed letterhead, which appears on each of the four pages. The letterhead on the remaining three pages is ignored in the following transcription.

2. Mary Haskin Parker Richards.

3. On the west bank of the Missouri River, near Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Upon arriving at Winter Quarters and finding my family and many friends there, I determined to spend the winter there in that neighborhood, and finding a place to be vacated soon over the border of Missouri, I moved there with my little family for the winter in view of continuing my journey to the mountains, the Saints newly appointed gathering place.

While here I was visited by Oliver Cowdery and wife on their way to visit the wife's brother [*blank space*][4] then [p. 1] living in Jackson County Mo. before starting for the Mountains in the spring to settle with the Saints, now locating in Salt Lake Valley.

Just before the time of their arrival at my home a very severe snow storm comenced, and they were very glad when they called for shelter to find they were with those of their own faith in what is called Mormonism.

The storm was severe and continued <so> as to stop travel, and they spent over two weeks with us at our then home.

This was not lost time to either [of] us. He soon learned of my past life and I of his. Our time was almost entirely spent in getting acquainted with each others past history.

I was surprised to see the bright recollection he seemed to have of his early experience with the prophet Joseph, especially as relating to the translation of the Book of Mormon, some of which I will here relate.

He represents Joseph as sitting by a table with the plates before him, and he reading the record with the Urim & Thummim. Oliver, his scribe, sits close beside to hear and write every word as translated. This is done by holding the translators over the words of the written record, and the translation appears distinctly in the instrument, which had been touched [p. 2] by the finger of God and dedicated and consecrated for the express purpose of translating languages.[5] This instrument now used fully performed its Mission. Every word was made distinctly visible even to every letter, and if Oliver did not in writing spell the word correctly it remained in the trans=lator until it was written correctly. This was the Mystery to Oliver, how Joseph being compar[a]tively ignorant could correct him in spelling

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4. David Whitmer (1805-88) (see "Introduction to David Whitmer Collection").

5. As transmitted by Richards, Cowdery here describes the "Urim and Thummim" (cf. Eth. 3:1, 4, 6, 21-28). However, the use of the Urim and Thummim seems to pre-date Cowdery's scribal work (see Lancaster 1990, 102; see also VI.C.3, ELIZABETH ANN WHITMER COWDERY AFFIDAVIT, 15 FEB 1870; and III.G.6, OLIVER COWDERY TO W. W. PHELPS, 7 SEP 1834, 14).

without seeing the word written,[6] and he would not be satisfied until he should be permitted to have the gift to translate as well as Joseph. To satisfy Oliver, Joseph with him went to the Lord in prayer until Oliver had the gift by which he could translate, and by so doing learned how it was that Joseph could correct him even in the spelling of words.[7]

Any one acquainted with the Book of Mormon can well see the necessity of such a provision; as the Book is full of names of persons, places, and names of strange entirely unusual in our ordinary English language. After this experience Oliver was quite satisfied to write what was given him, and make the corrections required. The entire record written as the Book of Mormon was thus brought forth to the world, not by the learning of Man, but by the Gift and power of God, and is Truth [p. 3]. This interview with Brother and sister Cowdery was one of entire freedom and familiarity, although we had never Met before; and his experience in connection with the prophet Joseph, when the ministrations of Angels were frequent in restoring Priesthood, and the Keys of Knowledge by which Man might be in future, in constant communication with God and Angel[s], for the establishment of an Everlasting Government upon the earth, made it all a most devinely and sacred interview to me.[8]

Before his leaving it was arranged that he should return in the spring in time to join the early emigration to the Valley of Salt Lake, where he had said he was going to give his time and services to the church, and <if> they desired it of him he would go [to] the ends of the Earth and tell <the> world of things that no other person then living could tell, of the Ministrations of God to man in the early history of this great and last dispensation of God to man.

Certainly to me his testimony was of the spiritual and abiding nature

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6. While similar claims were made by both Martin Harris and David Whitmer, they are not supported by the physical evidence. Both the dictated manuscript and the printer's copy contain spelling variations as well as corrections made subsequent to dictation.

7. The claim here that Cowdery successfully translated through the Urim and Thummim is incorrect. Although Cowdery expressed a desire to translate, he did not use the instrument. In fact, the offer was withdrawn because he failed to make an attempt. A revelation Smith dictated in April 1829 makes this clear: "Behold, I say unto you, my son [Oliver], that because you did not translate according to that which you desired of me, and did commence again to write for my servant, Joseph Smith, Jun., even so I would that ye should continue until you have finished this record" (LDS D&C 9:1).

8. See III.G.17, OLIVER COWDERY TESTIMONY, 13 JAN 1849.

never to be forgotten.

Oliver never returned; he was taken to join the throng above—to the society of Joseph, and others of sacred memory to him.

[s] S. W. Richards.

19.
G. J. KEEN STATEMENT, 1885

G. J. Keen, Statement to Arthur B. Deming, 14 April 1885, *Naked Truths About Mormonism* 1 (April 1888): 4.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Gabriel J. Keen (c. 1802-?), a longtime and prominent resident of Tiffin, Seneca County, Ohio, served as county agent (1838), auditor (elected 1840, 1842, and 1866), probate judge (1866), secretary of the local Masonic lodge (1848), and one of the incorporators of the Mechanics' Building Loan Association (1871) (Lang 1880, 346, 402, 634; *History of Seneca County, Ohio,* 1886, 249, 266, 275, 376, 510, 519, 521-22). Keen is listed in the 1880 census of Tiffin as a seventy-eight-year-old attorney (1880:179).

Keen, a leading member of the Tiffin Methodist Protestant Church, claims Cowdery renounced Mormonism before being admitted as a member (cf. Shook 1914, 56-58). While records of this church indicate that Cowdery was not only a member but served as secretary in 1844 (Gunn 1962, 62, 179; cf. *Cleveland Plain Dealer,* 7 May 1910; *Salt Lake Tribune,* 17 May 1910), Richard L. Anderson is probably correct in questioning Keen's claim that Cowdery's membership in the Tiffin church involved denying his Book of Mormon testimony (R. L. Anderson 1981, 57).

Aware of the lack of corroborative evidence for Keen's claim, Deming editorializes: "The church by *neglecting* to obtain Oliver Cowdery's sworn statement proving the fraudulent origin of Mormonism, probably committed a sin of omission that they never can rectify nor overbalance." Attempting to shore up Keen's affidavit, A. C. Williams wrote to Alvero Persons, Pastor of St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church in Tiffin, who responded in January 1901: "I regret to say that very careful research has failed to find any one now living here who can cer=tify from personal knowledge to the full facts stated in the affidavit. Very many knew all the parties men=tioned & are perfectly certain of the truths set forth, but no one that I can find saw or heard them for themselves. Affidavits on [in?] any number corroborating the reliability of Judge Keen can be had if needed. ..." (Alvero Persons to A. C. Williams, 8 January 1901, A. C. Williams Papers, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio). Far from being established fact, Keen's affidavit is nevertheless an intriguing document

about a little-known period in Oliver Cowdery's life.

STATE OF OHIO,

s.s.

COUNTY OF SENECA,

Personally appeared before me the unde[r]signed, a notary public within and for said county, G. J. Keen, a resident of said county, to me well known, and being sworn according to law, makes oath and says, "I was well acquainted with Oliver Cowdery, who formerly resided in this City, that some time in the year 1840, Henry Cronise,[1] Samuel Waggonor[2] and myself, with other Democrats of this country, determined to establish a Democratic newspaper in this city to aid in the election of Martin Van Buren to the presidency, and we authorized Henry Cronise, Esq. to go East and purchase a suitable press for that purpose. Mr. Cronise went East, purchased a press and engaged Oliver Cowdrey to edit the same. Mr. Cowdrey arrived in Tiffin some time before the press arrived. Some time after Mr. Cowdrey's arrival in Tiffin, we became acquainted with his, Cowdrey's, connection with Mormonism. We immediately called a meeting of our Democratic friends, and, having the "Book of Mormon" with us, it was unanimously agreed that Mr. Cowdrey could not be permitted to edit said paper.[3] Mr. Cowdrey opened a law office in Tiffin and soon effected a partnership with Joel W. Wilson.[4]

1. Henry Cronise (1789-1867), a native of Maryland, moved to Tiffin, Ohio, in 1826. In 1840 he established the *Van Burenite,* a political newspaper published at Tiffin. He was elected to the House of Representatives in 1842, and to the Senate in 1846 (Lang 1880, 253-54).

2. Samuel Waggoner was elected to the state Assembly in 1843. In 1847 he became one of the directors of the State Bank of Ohio in Tiffin (Lang 1880, 336, 402, 441). Waggoner is listed in the 1840 census of Clinton, Seneca County, Ohio, in his thirties (1840:154).

3. William Harvey Gibson, a prominent Tiffin politician, later wrote of the founding of this campaign paper: "Oliver Cowdery was to have been editor, but was dropped on the discovery that he was one of the seven founders of Mormonism" (*Seneca Advertiser,* 12 April 1892, cited in R. L. Anderson 1981, 40). Cowdery was replaced by John Breslin.

4. Joel W. Wilson (c. 1815-56) was also the secretary of the Seneca County Mutual Fire Insurance Company (Lang 1880, 240, 341). Wilson is listed in the 1850 census of Tiffin at age thirty-five (1850:882). See also a photograph of "Cowdery & Wilson" law card (dated 2 June 1843) from the *Seneca Advertiser* in R. L. Anderson 1981, 36.

"In a few years Mr. Cowdrey expressed a desire to associate himself with a Methodist Protestant Church of this city. Rev. John Souder[5] and myself were appointed a committee to wait on Mr. Cowdrey and confer with him respecting his connection with Mormonism, and the 'Book of Mormon.' We accordingly waited on Mr. Cowdrey at his residence in Tiffin, and there learned his connection, from him, with that order, and his full and final renunciation thereof. We then inquired of him if he had any objections to make a public recantation. He replied that he had objections; that in the first place it could do no good; that he had known several to do so, and they always regretted it; and in the second place it would have a tendency to draw public attention, invite criticism and bring *him* into contempt. But said he, nevertheless, if the church require it, I will submit to it, but I authorize and desire you and the church to publish and make known my recantation. We did not demand it, but submitted his name to the church and he was unanimously admitted a member thereof. At that meeting he arose and addressed the audience present, admitted his error and implored forgiveness, and said he was sorry and ashamed of his connection with Mormonism. He continued his membership while he resided at Tiffin and became superintendent of the Sabbath-school, and led an exemplary life while he resided with us. I have lived in this city upwards of fifty-three years, was auditor of the county, was elected to that office in 1840. I am now in my eighty-third year, and well remember the facts above related."

[Signed] G. J. KEEN.

Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence the 14th day of April, A.D. 1885.

FRANK L. EMICH.[6]
Notary Public, Seneca Co., O.

TIFFIN, Ohio, May 30, 1885.

G. J. Keen, Esq., is one of our oldest citizens, is a respectable man and

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5. John Souder (1799-1893) was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. He and his wife Elizabeth (1801-61) settled in Tiffin, Ohio, in 1826. He joined the Methodist Episcopal church in 1815, received his license to preach in 1842, and was ordained in 1845. In 1860 he sold his farm and retired to private life in Tiffin, where he evidently died (Lang 1880, 509, 512; Spitler and Wheatly 1987, 141).

6. Frank L. Emich, who also ran a bookstore in Tiffin, Ohio, is listed in the 1880 census of Tiffin at age twenty-five (1880:250).

is very highly esteemed.

[Signed] O. T. LOCK,[7]
Postmaster.

7. Otis T. Locke, with his brother Charles N. Locke, purchased the *Tiffin Tribune* in 1868, which was politically a Whig (later Republican) press (Lang 1880, 411). Locke is listed in the 1880 census of Tiffin at age thirty-six (1880:220).

OLIVER COWDERY ADDENDUM

In addition to the documents presented in this collection, the following are occasions on which Oliver Cowdery related his testimony but the record is either too brief or fragmentary to warrant special treatment.

1. Oliver Cowdery Testimony, Fall 1830.

Philo Dibble of Ohio remembered hearing that one of the missionaries from New York "had seen an angel" (Dibble 1882, 75).

2. Oliver Cowdery Account, Fall 1830.

Shaker Ashbel Kitchell noted in his journal that among the missionaries who visited his village (situated a short distance east of Cleveland, Ohio) was "Oliver Lowdree [Cowdery], who stated that he had been one who had been an assistant in the translation of the golden Bible, and had also seen the Angel, and had been commissioned by him to go out & bear testimony, that God would destroy this generation" (Copy in Elisha D. Blakeman, Journal, Shaker Museum, Old Chatham, New York; quoted in L. Flake 1979, 95; see also R. Anderson 1971, 489).

3. Oliver Cowdery Testimony, November 1830.

"About two weeks since some persons came along here with the book [of Mormon], one of whom pretends to have seen Angels, and assisted in translating the plates. He proclaims destruction upon the world within a few years,—holds forth that the ordinances of the gospel, have not been regularly administered since the days of the Apostles, till the said Smith and himself commenced the work. ... The name of the person here, who pretends to have a divine mission, and to have seen and conversed with Angels, is *Cowdray*" ("The Golden Bible," *Painesville Telegraph*, 16 November 1830, 3).

4. Oliver Cowdery Testimony, December 1830.

"Mr. Oliver Cowdry has his commission directly from the God of Heaven, and that he has credentials, written and signed by the hand of Jesus Christ, with whom he has personally conversed, and as such, said Cowdry claims that he and his associates are the only persons on earth who are qualified to administer in his name. By this authority, they proclaim to the world, that all who do not believe *their* testimony, and be baptised by them for the remission of sins ...

must be forever miserable" (*Painesville Telegraph*, 7 December 1830).

5. Oliver Cowdery Statement, February 1835.

Speaking to the newly selected twelve apostles, Cowdery declared: "You have been ordained to the Holy Priesthood. You have received it from those who had their power and authority from an angel" (Kirtland High Council Minutes, 21 February 1835, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah).

6. Oliver Cowdery Statement, November 1848.

Following the church's conference in Council Bluffs, Iowa, Orson Hyde called a meeting of the High Council in early November 1848 to consider Cowdery's restoration to the church. At this meeting, according to Reuben Miller, Cowdery said: "Brethren, for a number of years I have been separated from you. I now desire to come back. I wish to come humbly and to be one in your midst. I seek no station; I only wish to be identified with you. I am out of the Church. I am not a member of the Church; but I wish to become a member of it. I wish to come in at the door. I know the door. I have not come here to seek precedence. I come humbly and throw myself upon the decisions of this body, knowing as I do, that its decisions are right and should be obeyed" ("Last Days of Oliver Cowdery," *Deseret News* 9 [13 April 1859]).

7. Oliver Cowdery Interview with Jacob Gates, 1849.

Jacob Gates (1811-92), who left Salt Lake City on 19 October 1849 for a mission to England, visited Oliver Cowdery at his home in Richmond, Missouri. According to the affidavit of his son Jacob F. Gates (1854-?), who was told the story by his father, the senior Gates asked Cowdery about his testimony of the Book of Mormon. To which Cowdery responded: "Jacob, I want you to remember what I say to you. I am a dying man, and what would it profit me to tell you a lie? I know ... that this Book of Mormon was translated by the gift and power of God. My eyes saw, my ears heard, and my understanding was touched, and I know that whereof I testified is true. It was no dream, no vain imagination of the mind,—it was real." Jacob also asked regarding the restoration of the priesthood and received the following response: "Jacob, I felt the hand of the angel on my head as plainly as I could feel yours, and could hear his voice as I now hear yours" (Jacob F. Gates, Affidavit, 30 January 1912, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah; see also "Testimony of Jacob Gates," *Improvement Era* 15 [March 1912]: 418-19).

8. Oliver Cowdery Deathbed Statement, March 1850.

Hiram Page reported Oliver Cowdery's deathbed testimony: "Among his last

words, was to reaffirm his testimony to the Book of Mormon" (Hiram Page to Warren Cowdery, 20 March 1850, *Saints' Herald* 33 [6 February 1886]: 83).

John C. Whitmer, son of Jacob Whitmer, is quoted as stating: "I was also at the deathbed of Oliver Cowdery in 1850, and I heard him speak to my uncle David (Whitmer) and say: 'Brother David, be faithful to our testimony to the Book of Mormon, for we know that it is of God and that it is verily true.' He then closed his eyes in death" (Andrew Jenson, Edward Stevenson, and Joseph S. Black to Editor, 13 September 1888, in *Deseret News,* 17 September 1888, 2; see also reprint in *Saints' Herald* 35 [13 October 1888]: 651).

While visiting Oliver Cowdery's grave in Richmond, Missouri, with David Whitmer, David H. Cannon reported the former as saying: "when bearing his testimony, [Oliver Cowdery] said to the people in his room, placing his hands like this upon his head, saying 'I know the Gospel to be true and upon this head has Peter[,] James and John laid their hands and confer[r]ed the Holy Melchesdic Priesthood'" (David H. Cannon, Autobiography, 13 March 1917, 5, cited in *Ensign* [December 1996]: 41).

9. Edward Stevenson Reminiscence, 1886.

"I have often heard him [Oliver Cowdery] bear a faithful testimony to the restoration of the Gospel by the visitation of an angel, in whose presence he stood in company with the Prophet Joseph Smith and David Whitmer. He testified that he beheld the plates, the leaves being turned over by the angel, whose voice he heard, and that they were commanded as witnesses to bear a faithful testimony to the world of the vision that they were favored to behold, and that the translation from the plates in the Book of Mormon was accepted of the Lord, and that it should go forth to the world and no power on earth should stop its progress" ("The Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon," *Millennial Star* 48 [5 July 1886]: 420).

10. Elizabeth Ann (Whitmer) Cowdery Statement, 1887.

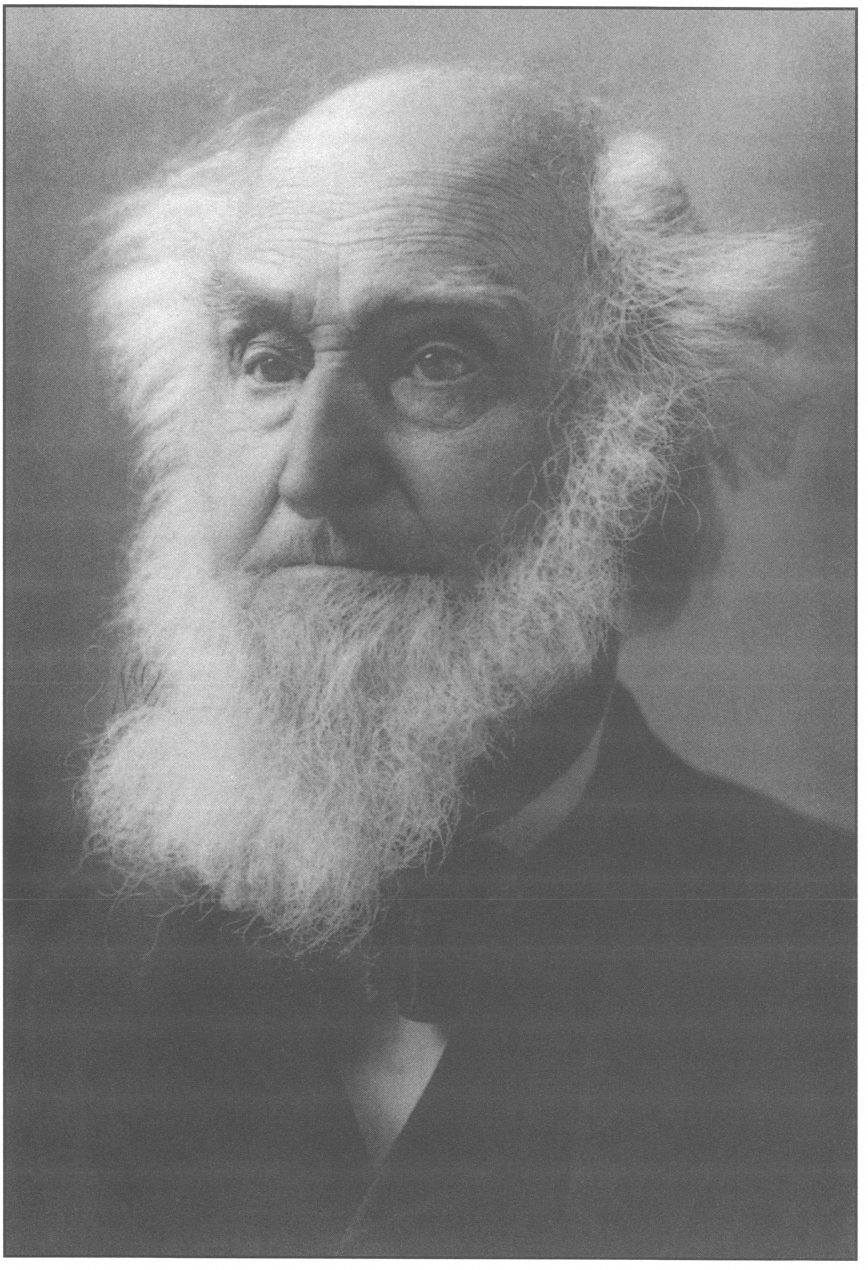
"My husband, Oliver Cowdery, bore his testimony to the truth and divine origin of the Book of Mormon, as one of the three witnesses of the Book of Mormon; as to his standing on doctrine he stood where he did when he preached the first sermon; that was preached in the last days in the Church of Christ in 1829 [1830], when the Bible and the Book of Mormon alone were the guide to the faith of the church. From the hour when the glorious vision of the Holy Messenger revealed to mortal eyes the hidden prophecies which God had promised his faithful followers should come forth in due time, until the moment when he passed away from earth. He always without one doubt or shud-

der of turning affirmed the divinity and truth of the Book of Mormon" (Elizabeth Ann Cowdery to David Whitmer, 8 March 1887, in *The Return,* December 1892, 7).

11. Philander Page Statement, 1907.

During a photographic mission to Richmond, Missouri, in 1907, George Edward Anderson spoke with Philander Page, son of Book of Mormon witness Hiram Page, who "said [he] was present at the deathbed of Oliver Cowdery; and his father Hiram Page, was nurse. Oliver conversed with the brethren and reaffirmed his testimony to the Book of Mormon and to be faithful to their testimony" (George Edward Anderson, Diary, 27, Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum, Salt Lake City, Utah, cited in Holzapfel, Cottle, and Stoddard 1995, 67).

H.
John H. Gilbert
COLLECTION



John H. Gilbert, date and photographer unknown. Courtesy Library-Achives, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, The Auditorium, Independence, Missouri.

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN H. GILBERT COLLECTION

John Hulburd Gilbert (1802-95) was born at Richmond, Ontario County, New York. He moved to Palmyra, New York, in 1812, where he later married Chloe P. Thayre on 4 September 1827 (*Wayne Sentinel,* 7 September 1827). After training as a printer in Canandaigua, Gilbert returned to Palmyra in 1824 and began working with Pomeroy Tucker and Egbert B. Grandin publishing the *Wayne Sentinel.* After retiring from the printing trade, Gilbert died at Palmyra on 26 January 1895 (McIntosh 1877, 106; T. Cook 1930, 38, 40, 82, 119, 164, 206; III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 1892, 1; Obituary, *Wayne County Dispatch,* January 1895, clipping in John H. Gilbert file, Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York; and John H. Gilbert, tombstone, Palmyra Cemetery, Palmyra, New York).

Gilbert's testimony was sought out largely because of his involvement with printing the Book of Mormon, having proofed the printer's manuscript and set most of the type. According to Gilbert, negotiations for printing the Book of Mormon were begun in early June 1829. Gilbert commenced setting type in mid-August 1829 and the first bound volumes of the Book of Mormon were completed and ready for sale in late March 1830, although the entire run of 5,000 copies of the first edition was not completed until the following summer. While Gilbert gave several statements regarding his observations during the printing of the Book of Mormon, he was candid about his limited involvement with Joseph Smith and other matters dealing with Mormon origins. In a letter to Diedrich Willers, Sr., of Fayette, Seneca County, New York, dated 29 December 1880, for instance, Gilbert said: "Although I was <the> principal typesetter of the first Mormon Bible, I had no acquaintance with any of the originators of this great humbug, except Martin Harris. Jo Smith I never saw but once—the Whitmars from your County, I never saw, and know nothing of them—so that from my <u>own</u> knowled[g]e of any of the originators of this fraud, I am unable to furnish anything raliable worth preserving" (John H. Gilbert to Diedrich Willers, Sr., 29 December 1880; cf. Dickinson 1885, 249).

Concerning Gilbert's personal beliefs, Joseph S. Black wrote after interviewing him in September 1888: "We asked him what denomination he belonged to; he answered, 'None.' We said we could record him as a Christian. He answered, 'Not by a damsite, I do not believe in Joseph Smith, God nor the Bible.' However, he stated that he wanted to live right and

would risk the future" ("The Journal of Joseph Smith Black," *Our Pioneer Heritage* 10 [1967]: 294).

In 1881 Gilbert wrote to Diedrich Willers, Jr., of Fayette, New York: "Although my memory is pretty good, I do not consider myself capable of writing a history of past events, and furthermore, I have no desire to see myself in print" (John H. Gilbert to Diedrich Willers, Jr., 5 January 1881, Seneca Falls Historical Society, Seneca Falls, New York). While Gilbert never published a history of early Mormonism, he did write a number of unpublished statements and was interviewed on several occasions. The following is a collection of published and unpublished statements Gilbert gave about Mormon origins.[1]

1. For other interviews and statements from Gilbert not included in the following collection, see III.B.8, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1881; III.C.5, JOHN H. GILBERT AFFIDAVIT, 12 JUL 1881; and III.J.13, ORLANDO SAUNDERS, WILLIAM VAN CAMP, AND JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEWS WITH FREDERICK G. MATHER, JUL 1880.

1.
JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1877

"Joe Smith. Something About the Early Life of the Mormon Prophet. Story of the Mormon Bible From the Man Who First Printed It. The Men Who Figured in Its Production and Publication," *Post and Tribune* (Detroit), 3 December 1877, 3. Reprinted in *The American Bookseller* 4 (15 December 1877).

EDITORIAL NOTE

In this earliest known interview of Gilbert, apparently conducted by a reporter from Detroit's *Post and Tribune* on Saturday, 1 December 1877, Gilbert describes his role in printing the Book of Mormon and relates what he knows about Joseph Smith and Mormon origins.

Maj. J. H. Gilbert, of Palmyra, N.Y., is in the city on a visit to his son, Charles T. Gilbert,[1] of Nevin & Mills. He is a printer; was formerly proprietor of the Wayne (Palmyra) *Sentinel,* and is the man who set up the Mormon Bible from the original manuscript. It was the custom of the printers as the sheets were run through the press to take one of each form for preservation. Maj. Gilbert did this, and now has with him in this city the unbound sheets of the Mormon Bible as he then took them from the press. These he cheerfully exhibits to any person who has a curiosity to look at them. The book was a quarto of 580 pages. The contents were sub-divided into chapters broken into frequent paragraphs, but the verses were not numbered as they are in later editions.[2] Upon the title page appears the name of Joseph Smith as "Author and Proprietor." In all subsequent editions he appears simply as "Translator." This change was rendered necessary to carry out the theory afterward adopted that Smith dug up these writings and translated them from "reformed Egyptian" by means of a pair of supernatural spectacles.[3]

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1. Charles T. Gilbert, age twenty-eight, is listed in the 1870 Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan, census, which also records that he "Works at Express Office" (1870:211).

2. Editions from 1852 through 1877 had numbered paragraphs. The 1879 edition introduced verses and references by Orson Pratt.

3. See discussion in introduction to III.L.12, BOOK OF MORMON COPYRIGHT, 11 JUN 1829.

A reporter of THE POST AND TRIBUNE met Maj. Gilbert on Saturday, and had a very pleasant chat with him about the early days of Mormondom in Wayne county, N.Y., in which that modern religion started. He found the veteran printer, though now 75 years of age, remarkably well preserved, and hale and vigorous as a man of 50. It was more than half a century ago that he learned the printer's trade, of Chauncey Morse,[4] now a resident of this city, and had just established himself in business at Palmyra, when, after a short newspaper experience, he sold out to E. B. Grandin, and continued in his employment as a journeyman printer.

One pleasant day in the summer of 1829, Hiram Smith,[5] Joe's brother, came to the office to negotiate for the printing of a book.[6] The arrangements were completed. Five thousand copies of the book were to be printed for $3,000. A well-to-do farmer named Martin Harris,[7] living in the neighborhood, agreed to become security for the payment of the money, and the work was at once put in hand.[8] Maj. Gilbert set up all the type of the book, except some 20 or 30 pages, and did nearly all the press work.[9] It was all worked off on a hand press.

The copy was brought to the office by Hiram Smith. It was written on foolscap paper in a good, clear hand. The handwriting was Oliver

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4. Chauncey Morse (1794-1882?) was born in Stratford, Connecticut. He apprenticed as a printer under J. D. Bemis of Canandaigua, New York, 1811-18. His printing career includes: *Onondaga Register,* 1817-18 (Onondaga Hollow, New York); *Ontario Repository,* 1818-21, 1828-30 (Canandaigua, New York); and *Livingston Journal,* 1821-25 (Geneseo, New York). He became a bookseller in Detroit, Michigan, 1843-54. He may have died in Detroit (Hamilton 1936, 287).

5. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

6. This is the only source that places Hyrum in a prominent position in negotiating for the printing of the Book of Mormon. Gilbert seems to associate Hyrum's visit with the final preparations before typesetting began in mid-August 1829. Thereafter, according to Gilbert, Hyrum brought portions of the manuscript to Grandin's office each day.

7. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

8. On 25 August 1829 Martin Harris mortgaged his farm for the printing of the Book of Mormon (see III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829).

9. Gilbert said that he and J. H. Bortles began setting type in mid-August 1829 (III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 3, 4).

Cowdery's.[10] There was not a punctuation mark in the whole manuscript.[11] The sentences were all run in without capitals, or other marks to designate where one left off and another began, and it was no easy task to straighten out the stuff. Maj. Gilbert, perceiving that large portions were stolen verbatim from the Bible, used to have a copy of that book on his case to aid him in deciphering the manuscript and putting in the proper punctuation marks.

At first Smith used to come to the office every morning with just enough manuscript to last through the day. But it was so much bother to put in the punctuation that Gilbert said: "Bring me around a quantity of copy at a time, and I can go through it and fix it up evenings, and so get along faster with it."

Smith replied: "This is pretty important business, young man, and I don't know as we can trust this manuscript in your possession."

Finally his scruples were overcome, and he consented to the arrangement. Then he would bring around a quire of paper, or 48 pages, at a time, and this would last several days. When the matter had been set all the copy was carefully taken away again by Smith. It took eight months to set up the book and run it through the press.[12]

Maj. Gilbert was not much interested in the book, thought it rather dry and prosy, and to this day has never thought it worth his while to read it a second time.

Of course, nobody then dreamed that the "Book of Mormon" was destined to achieve the notoriety which it has gained, or that it was to cut such a figure in the history of this country. It did not find a very ready sale at the outset, and Harris, who had mortgaged his farm to pay the printer's bill, was cleaned out financially.[13] He was an intimate friend of the Smiths, and afterwards became an adherent to the doctrines they taught. He did not

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10. The printer's copy was in Cowdery's hand except for a few pages believed to be in the handwritings of Hyrum Smith and Martin Harris (see Skousen 1992 and 1993). On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

11. This is an exaggeration since Cowdery did provide some punctuation.

12. The printing of the Book of Mormon was completed in mid-March 1830 (III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892; and III.E.1, *WAYNE SENTINEL,* 1824-1836, under 19 March 1830).

13. On 7 April 1831 Martin Harris sold about 151 acres of his farm to Thomas Lakey of Palmyra for $3,000 (see III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829).

follow them Westward, however, but remained near his own home, where he died two years ago.[14]

With this book as the basis of his teaching, Joe Smith began to preach, and soon formed a congregation of followers in Palmyra and the neighboring village of Manchester, where the Smiths resided. A year later he, with 30 of his followers, removed to Kirtland, Ohio. His subsequent history is well known.

There were nine children in the Smith family. Joe was then about 23 years of age. He was a lazy, good-for-nothing lout, chiefly noted for his capacity to hang around a corner grocery and punish poor whisky. He had good physical strength, but he never put it to any use in the way of mowing grass or sawing wood. He could wrestle pretty well, but was not given to exerting his muscles in any practical way. He had evidently made up his mind that there was an easier way of getting a living than by honest industry.

He was the discoverer of a magic stone which he used to carry around in his hat. Holding it carefully laid in the bottom of his hat he would bring his eye to bear on it at an angle of about 45 degrees and forthwith discover the whereabouts of hidden treasures. He would draw a circle on the ground and say to the awe struck bystanders, "dig deep enough within this circle and you will find a pot of gold." But he never dug himself. He had a good share of the rising generation of Palmyra out digging in the suburbs, and to this day traces of the pits thus dug are pointed out to curious vis[i]tors.

As he claimed to be the author of the "Book of Mormon" his story was that by the aid of his wonderful stone he found gold plates on which were inscribed the writings in hieroglyphics. He translated them by means of a pair of magic spectacles which the Lord delivered to him at the same time that the golden tablets were turned up. But nobody but Joe himself ever saw the golden tablets or the far-seeing spectacles. He dictated the book, concealed behind a curtain, and it was written down by Cowdery.[15] This course seemed to be rendered necessary by the fact that Joe did not know how to write. Otherwise the book might have gone to the printer in the

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14. True, Harris remained in Kirtland, Ohio, when the church gathered with the Smiths in Nauvoo, Illinois. However, in 1870 Harris immigrated to Utah, where he subsequently died at Clarkston on 10 July 1875.

15. Martin Harris repeatedly mentioned the use of a curtain during his time as scribe (III.F.1, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEWS WITH JOHN A. CLARK, 1827 & 1828; V.D.2, CHARLES ANTHON TO E. D. HOWE, 17 FEB 1834; and V.D.3, CHARLES ANTHON TO THOMAS WINTHROP COIT, 3 APR 1841).

handwriting of Old Mormon himself.

It is now pretty well established that the "Book of Mormon" was written in 1812 by the Rev. Solomon Spalding, of Ohio, as a popular romance.[16] He could not find any one to print it. The manuscript was sent to Pittsburg, where it lay in a printing office several years. Spalding was never able to raise the money to secure the printing of the story, and after his death in 1824 [1816] it was returned to his wife. By some means, exactly how is not known, it fell into the hands of one Sidney Rigdon,[17] who, with Joe Smith, concocted the scheme by which it was subsequently brought out as the work of Smith.[18]

The dealings with the outside world in respect to it were manipulated by Hiram Smith, an elder brother of Joe.

Maj. Gilbert's recollection of all these persons and events is fresh and vivid, and he has a fund of anecdote and incident relating to them.

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16. On the Spaulding theory, see L. Bush 1977.

17. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

18. Concerning Gilbert's subsequent efforts to help establish the Spaulding theory, see III.H.4, JOHN GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 14 OCT 1879.

2.
JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 10 FEBRUARY 1879

John H. Gilbert to James T. Cobb, 10 February 1879, Theodore A. Schroeder Papers, Rare Books and Manuscripts Division, New York Public Library, New York, New York.

EDITORIAL NOTE

James T. Cobb (1834-?), a Salt Lake City newspaperman who collected statements about Mormon origins, corresponded with Gilbert, who helped him obtain statements from the residents of Palmyra and Manchester.[1] In this letter, the first of three written to Cobb, Gilbert answers various questions about the Book of Mormon's publication.

Palmyra, Wayne Co., N.Y.
Feb. 10, 1879.

Mr. Cobb,

D[ea]r. Sir—I received your letter through Mr. Tyler[2] P[ost]. M[aster]. two days ago, and now answer your interrogations to the best of my recollection. But <u>one</u> copy of the manuscript was furnished the printer. I never heard of but one.[3] As quick as Mr. Grandin[4] got his type and got things all ready to commence the work, Hyrum Smith[5] brought to the office 24 pages of manuscript on foolscap paper,[6] closely written and legible, but not

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1. On Cobb, see introduction to I.F.3, EMMA SMITH BIDAMON INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPH SMITH III, FEB 1879.

2. Wells Tyler became postmaster of Palmyra on 13 March 1873, a position he held until 22 March 1881 when he was replaced by Henry A. Chase (T. Cook 1930, 283).

3. There were two manuscripts of the Book of Mormon: an original dictated manuscript and a printer's copy (see Howard 1969; Jessee 1970).

4. On Egbert B. Grandin (1806-45), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 77.

5. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

6. Royal Skousen, who has carefully examined the printer's manuscript at the RLDS Church Library-Archives, has informed me that with few

a punctuation mark from beginning to end. This was about the middle of August, 1829, and the printing was completed in March, 1830. It was some weeks after this before the binder[7] was able to deliver any copies.

I cannot say whether the entire work of "translation" was completed at the time the printing was commenced or not, but think [p. 1] it was.[8] Oliver Cowdery[9] was not engaged as compositor on the work or was not a printer. He was a frequent visitor to the office, and did several times take up a "stick" and set a part of a page—he may have set 10 or 12 pages, all told—he also a few times looked over the manuscript when proof was being read.[10] In one instance he was looking over the manuscript, when the word "travail" occurred twice in the form, but spelling in the manuscript, travel. Mr. Grandin when reading the proof pronounced the word correctly, but Cowdery did not seem to know the difference.[11]

I do not think there is a single person living here or near here, who knows that Rigdon visited Smith prior to 1830.[12] Where Tucker got his information, I am unable to say.

Willard Chase[13] and Joseph Capron[14] are both dead. As to Martin

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exceptions the manuscript is organized in "gatherings" of twenty-four pages; that is, six sheets folded in half and secured by threads running through holes at the fold, the whole forming a kind of booklet. This is perhaps why Gilbert could remember years later that Hyrum had brought twenty-four pages of manuscript at a time to Grandin's office (personal communication, 3 June 1992; see also Skousen 1992, 2-3).

7. Luther Howard (see III.E.3, *PALMYRA REFLECTOR*, 1829-1831, n. 11.)

8. The translation was completed by the end of June 1829, and printing commenced about mid-August 1829.

9. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

10. When Cowdery wrote to Smith on 28 December 1829, he mentioned helping with the printing (III.G.3, OLIVER COWDERY TO JOSEPH SMITH, 28 DEC 1829).

11. This anecdote was told by Gilbert repeatedly (see III.H.5, JOHN H. GILBERT TO THOMAS GREGG, 19 JUN 1881, 38; and III.H.7, JOHN H. GILBERT TO CLARK BRADEN, 27 FEB 1884).

12. Subsequently Gilbert referred Cobb to Lorenzo Saunders, who was then living in Michigan (see III.H.4, JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 14 OCT 1879).

13. On Willard Chase (1798-1871), see introduction to III.A.14, WILLARD CHASE STATEMENT, CIRCA 11 DEC 1833.

14. On Joseph Capron (c. 1792-1874), see introduction to III.A.3, JOSEPH CAPRON STATEMENT, 8 NOV 1833.

Harris' family, I know nothing of them—they left here years ago, and I cannot find by inquiry that [p. 2] anyone knows of their whereab<o>uts.

As to the time of Smith's marriage: I frequently heard Harris speak of Smiths going to be married, and I am confident it was as late as 1828—it was some time after the pretended finding of the plates.[15]

As to Smith going to Waterloo to live, is new to me, and I think a mistake.[16]

Late in 1827 or early in '[18]28, was the first I heard Harris speak of Jo's finding the plates, and with the plates a pair of large spectacles, by looking through which Jo could translate the hieroglyphics on the plates into English. The plates found by Jo, as repre=sented at the time, purported to be a history of the lost tribes of I<s>rael—and not establish=ing a new religion, but confirming the Old Testament. Smith was always mysterious in all his transactions.

That the Spaulding Manuscript is the foun<d>ation of the Mormon Bible, I have not the least doubt; but how they got hold of it, and [p. 3] how Smith and Rigdon got together, is the great mystery to me. That Rigdon made a copy while working in the Pittsburgh Office, (if he ever worked there) I do not believe—it was too big a job.[17]

Mr. Orlin Sanders,[18] who lives about two miles south of the village, was well acquaint=ed with the Smith family, and probaly recollects many things I know nothing about. When I see him I will question him, and if I learn anything that I think will assist you, I will write you again.[19]

That you may succeed in exposing this monstrous fraud and humbug from beginning to end, beyond dispute, is my sincere wish.

Yours truly
J. H. Gilbert

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15. Gilbert is mistaken. Smith was married on 18 January 1827.

16. Gilbert is incorrect. Joseph Smith lived at the Peter Whitmer, Sr., home, which was situated about four miles northwest of the village of Fayette and three miles southwest of Waterloo, Seneca County, New York.

17. On the Spaulding theory, see Bush 1977.

18. On Orlando Saunders (1803-89), see introduction to III.B.6, ORLANDO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 1881.

19. For Gilbert's report to Cobb after his visit to Orlando Saunders, see III.H.4, JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 14 OCT 1879.

3.
JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 16 MARCH 1879

John H. Gilbert to James T. Cobb, 16 March 1879, Theodore A. Schroeder Papers, Rare Books and Manuscripts Division, New York Public Library, New York, New York.

EDITORIAL NOTE

In his second letter to Cobb, John H. Gilbert continues his reminiscence of events surrounding the Book of Mormon's printing. For Gilbert's previous letter, see III.H.2, JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 10 FEB 1879.

Palmyra, N.Y.,
March 16, 1879

Mr. Ja<mes> T. Cobb,

Dear Sir—

J. N. T. Tucker[1] was a cousin of Pomeroy Tucker,[2] but did not work in the office at the time the Mormon Bible was printed, but did subsequently a short time, if my memory serves me. He went to Groton, C[onnecticu]t., got married, became a preacher—Baptist I believe—committed some crime,—was tried and accquitted on the plea of insanity—he was a "bad egg." I think he died some years ago. His statement in regard to a page of the manuscript being spirited away by some of the typos in the office, is totally untrue. The work he speaks of, "Mormon Delusions and Monstrosities," I never heard of before, and know nothing about it or where it can be procured.[3] [p. 1] ...[4]

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1. On J. N. T. Tucker, see III.I.10, J. N. T. TUCKER STATEMENT, 1842.

2. On Pomeroy Tucker (1802-70), see introduction to III.J.5, POMEROY TUCKER REMINISCENCE, 1858.

3. See III.I.10, J. N. T. TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1842.

4. At this point, Gilbert quotes Jacob 2:20, 22-28 in the first edition of the Book of Mormon, which is here deleted (ms., pp. 2-4).

I have given you the whole paragraph, except five lines where I have inserted stars, thinking that perhaps in later editions they have left out the most important—the condemnation of polygamy. What the sentence you quote, taken by itself, has to do with polygamy, I fail to see—but taken in connection with the whole paragraph, is denunciatory of it, if it means anything—as I understand it. I do not think polyg=amy was thought of until after they settled in Nauvoo. Hyrum Smith[5] was the only one of the family I had any acquaint=ance with, and that very slight. In my last letter, I gave you all the knowledge [p. 4] I possess in regard to the manuscript all in Cowdery's hand-writing.[6]

I think Mrs. Emma Smith[7] did not stay at Palmyra much of the time, but know nothing certain,—have inquired of several, but find them as ignorant as myself in regard to it.

I never had any acquainta[n]ce with Cowdery until the Mormon Bible was commenced. I suppose Cowdery was paid by Harris for making the copy[8]—a six months' job at least—and think he was shrewd enough to worm out of Jo all the facts, and <became> a brother conspirator.

I think Harris really believed that Jo found the plates on the commencement of the fraud, but changed his opinion before he left Palmyra. I asked Harris once if he had really seen the plates with his naked eyes?—his reply was, No, but with spiritual eyes.[9] [p. 5] I cannot learn from inquiry anything positive as to the time Harris went to Kirtland, O. I think he went there in

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5. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

6. Two other handwritings appear in the printer's copy besides Cowdery's. In his 1892 Memorandum, Gilbert implied that Martin Harris's and Hyrum Smith's handwritings appeared in the manuscript (III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892). With the help of Dean C. Jessee, Royal Skousen has recently verified the accuracy of Gilbert's memory (see Skousen 1992 and 1993). The printer's manuscript is held by the RLDS Church Library-Archives in Independence, Missouri.

7. On Emma Smith (1804-79), see "Introduction to Emma Smith Collection."

8. Harris may have supported Cowdery while he prepared the printer's copy of the manuscript, which according to Lucy Smith took place in a rented room in Palmyra Village, but beyond this possibility there is nothing to support Gilbert's assertion.

9. Elsewhere Gilbert says Harris had told him of seeing the plates with "Spiritual eyes" while the former was setting type for the "Testimony of Three Witnesses" (see III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 4; see also "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection").

the fall of 1830, and came back in the spring of 1831—was backwards and forwards several times, before he left Palmyra for good

Perhaps Smith had some tin plates—cannot say—new idea to me.

Hope you will succeed in ferreting this humbug and fraud out, and expose the thing from beginning to end

Yours truly
J. H. Gilbert

4.
JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 14 OCTOBER 1879

Wilhelm Ritter von Wymetal, *Joseph Smith, the Prophet, His Family and His Friends* (Salt Lake City: Tribune Printing and Publishing Co., 1886), 231.

EDITORIAL NOTE

In February 1879, Gilbert promised James T. Cobb that he would visit Orlando Saunders and question him regarding what he knew about the Smiths (see III.H.2, JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 10 FEB 1879). Lorenzo Saunders, who lived in Michigan, was evidently visiting his brother in Palmyra at the time Gilbert called at Orlando's home. According to Lorenzo, Gilbert "wanted to know if I ... remembered see=ing Sidney Rigdon in that neighbor=hood previous to 1830. ... Says I to Gilbert[,] Sidney Rig=don was about Smiths before 1830 in my opinion. Gilbert asked if I would make [an] aff=idavit that I saw Rigdon at Smiths before that time? I told him I would think the matter over. After a while I think I told him I would" (III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884, 4-5). The evening following his conversation with Saunders, Gilbert excitedly dashed off the present letter to Cobb.

The original letter has not been located, but in 1886 German correspondent Wilhelm von Wymetal[1] published a portion of Gilbert's letter to

1. Wilhelm Ritter von Wymetal (1838-96), also known as Wilhelm Wyl, first came to Salt Lake City in December 1884 as a correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt*. In early February 1885 von Wymetal returned to Salt Lake City and remained until about the end of May, devoting his time "exclusively to the taking of deposition from the mouths of living witnesses" (Wymetal 1886, 10). In March 1885 he wrote a number of letters which were published in the *Tageblatt*. In a certificate prefacing von Wymetal's book, David F. Walker mentioned that von Wymetal had "spent nearly five months in Salt Lake City, in the spring of 1885, and in April and May, 1886" (Wymetal 1886, 9). Another certificate describes the manner in which von Wymetal interviewed his witnesses. C. G. Webb wrote on 14 May 1885 that "in many interviews during March, April and May, 1885, I have given all the facts within my knowledge to Dr. W. Wyl, who wrote them down in shorthand" (Wymetal 1886, 7). Although von Wymetal's book was intended as

Cobb. According to von Wymetal, the original letter is dated Palmyra, New York, 14 October 1879.

[Palmyra, New York]
[October 14, 1879]

Last evening I had about 15 minutes conversation with Mr. Lorenzo Saunders of Reading, Hillsdale Co., Mich[igan]. He has been gone about thirty years. He was born south of our village in 1811, and was a near neighbor of the Smith family—knew them all well; was in the habit of visiting the Smith boys; says he knows that RIGDON was hanging around Smith's for EIGHTEEN MONTHS PRIOR TO THE PUBLISHING OF THE MORMON BIBLE.

[John H. Gilbert]

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the first in a series of Mormon portraits, no subsequent volumes were issued.

5.
JOHN H. GILBERT TO THOMAS GREGG, 19 JUNE 1881

Charles A. Shook, *The True Origin of Mormon Polygamy* (Mendota, Illinois: W[estern] A[dvent] C[hristian] P[ublication] Ass[ociation]., [c. 1910]), 37-38.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Thomas Gregg (1808-?), a native of Belmont County, Ohio, was a prolific newspaper editor and publisher in the Mid-West. His works include *The Literary Cabinet* (Ohio, 1833), the *Western Adventurer* (Montrose, Wisconsin, 1838), the *Carthagenian* (1847), the first paper published in Carthage, Illinois, the *Warsaw Signal* (1847-48), and the *Hamiltonian Representative* (1858-62). He also published two histories of Hancock County, Illinois, in 1846 and 1880. He is perhaps better known for his book *The Prophet of Palmyra* (New York: John B. Alden, 1890), a critical assessment of Joseph Smith's life.

Following publication of the Kelley interviews in the 1 June 1881 issue of the *Saints' Herald* (see "Introduction to William H. and Edmund L. Kelley Collection"), which included an interview with John H. Gilbert, Gregg wrote from Hamilton, Illinois, to Gilbert inquiring about the accuracy of the published version of his interview with the Kelleys (see III.B.8, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1881). In the present letter, dated 19 June 1881, Gilbert complains to Gregg that Kelley misrepresented him in several instances. The original letter has not been located, but Charles A. Shook published it in 1910.

[19 June 1881]

I am in receipt of the *Saints' Herald* you sent me, also your letter. I had received a *Herald* several days before I received the one you sent, probably from Kelley, who signs the article. His report of the conversation had with me is full of misrep[p. 37]resentations. In the first paragraph, Hyrum said, "It was translated from plates by the power of God," etc., is utterly false. I never had any conversation with Hyrum in regard to the translation. In regard to the change of spelling two words, he words my answer entirely different from what I said to him. I told him distinctly that I changed the spelling of

one word, which occurred twice in one form—no believing about it. The word changed was "travail," spelled "travel" in both instances, showing that the copyist did not know the difference.[1] I did not tell him I set all the type, as he reports me saying.[2] In regard to Smith claiming to be author, etc., I told him I understood in later editions he only claimed to be translator, etc.; the balance of the story in regard to this authorship, is all his own coining and answering.[3] I told Kelley I thought the Spaulding MS. [manuscript] was the foundation of the M[ormon]. B[ible]., and gave him my reasons for thinking so. The long paragraph in relation to Mr. [James T.] Cobb[4] and Lorenzo Saunders[5] is a mixed mess of truth and falsehood. When I asked Mr. S[aunders]. if he knew whether [Sidney] Rigdon[6] was hanging around Smith previous to the publication of the M[ormon]. B[ible]., he said, "Yes, at least eighteen months before." There was no hesitancy about it[7]; and this is what I told [William H.] Kell[e]y. You can see how he reported the matter. I did not tell Kelley that I had known a copy or copies of the M[ormon]. B[ible]. to sell for $500, or more than that; that is one of his misrepresentations.[8]

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1. See also III.H.2, JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 10 FEB 1879; and III.H.7, JOHN H. GILBERT TO CLARK BRADEN, 27 FEB 1884.

2. J. H. Bortles helped Gilbert set type (III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892). Oliver Cowdery also set perhaps a few pages (III.H.2, JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 10 FEB 1879; and III.G.3, OLIVER COWDERY TO JOSEPH SMITH, 28 DEC 1829). William Van Camp may have also set some type (III.J.13, ORLANDO SAUNDERS, WILLIAM VAN CAMP, AND JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEWS WITH FREDERICK G. MATHER, JUL 1880, 204). Gilbert reportedly said in 1888 that "of the 580 of which the book consisted he set about 500 pages himself" (III.H.9, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, SEP 1888).

3. Compare III.H.1, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1877.

4. On Cobb, see introduction to I.F.3, EMMA SMITH BIDAMON INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPH SMITH III, FEB 1879.

5. On Lorenzo Saunders (1811-88), see introduction to III.B.12, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 17 SEP 1884.

6. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

7. According to Saunders, there was some hesitancy (see III.B.15, LORENZO SAUNDERS INTERVIEW, 12 NOV 1884, 13-14).

8. Gilbert had previously written to Diedrich Willers, Jr., of Fayette, New York: "There are but 4 copies of the Mormon Bible besides my own in Palmyra, and the owners of them do not wish to part with them. Two years since I bought a copy for a gentleman in Phila=delphia, and paid $15 for it,

What he charges me with saying about the Smiths and Tucker's book, is all his own coining.

Mr. Jackaway tells me he did not tell Kelley that Joe and his father got drunk on cider, but on whiskey.[9]

I do know that Kelley has misrepresented me in his report of my answers and statements, and I have no doubt he has misrepresented others also. What his object was I cannot divine. He may think it will strengthen the faith of Mormons a little. Well, if people are fools enough to believe in it, let them; it is no worse than some other humbugs. ...

If you have any Mormon friends in your vicinity, who have read Kelley's report in the *Saints' Herald,* you can say to them that he is a great falsifier, and I consider him the champion liar of America.

Yours truly,
J. H. GILBERT.

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the least I could get it for. Mr. Clemons, prop[r]ietor of the Journal, paid $15 for a copy. My copy I ask $500 for, and expect to get that price some day. These 5 copies are all that I know of—You see they are very scarce and high-priced" (John H. Gilbert to Diedrich Willers, Jr., 5 January 1881, Seneca Falls Historical Society, Seneca Falls, New York).

9. See III.B.9, HIRAM JACKWAY INTERVIEW, 1881.

6.
JOHN H. GILBERT STATEMENTS, 1882

John H. Gilbert, Statements, 13 October 1882, and 25 October 1882, The Ambrose Swasey Library, Colgate Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, New York.

EDITORIAL NOTE

On 27 October 1882, A. H. Strong, then president of the Rochester Theological Seminary, purchased a first edition of the Book of Mormon which included two brief statements of John H. Gilbert pasted inside the front and back boards. The first, dated 13 October 1882, is a statement about the printing of the Book of Mormon. The second, dated 25 October 1882, is a statement certifying that the book is a first edition. Both statements are apparently in the handwriting of Gilbert. A note on the back endpaper of the book, written in a different hand, reads: "Wm. Rushmores / Book / Palmyra." William Rushmore, who died at Palmyra about 1904, apparently moved from Farmington to Palmyra in the 1860s (T. Cook 1930, 22). A typescript of the original has been kindly supplied by Dr. Norman J. Kansfield of The Ambrose Swasey Library, Rochester, New York.

[*Front Cover*]

The manuscript of the Mormon Bible was in the handwriting of Oliver Cowdery,[1] and was brought to the office in installments of [24?][2] closely written pages, without a punctuation mark of any kind from beginning to the end, by Hyrum Smith,[3] and was taken away by him when the printer

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1. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

2. This number is obscured in the original as it is close to the inside binding of the book and worn with age. The number 24 is probably correct since Gilbert used it in other statements (see III.H.2, JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 10 FEB 1879; and III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 2).

3. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

had got through with it, and is now in possession of Mr. [David] W[h]itmer[4] of Richmond, Missouri. I was the compositor and the practical workman in producing this "Book of Mormon".

J. H. Gilbert
80 y[ea]rs & 6 mo[nths]. old, October 13, 1882

[*Back Cover*]

I hereby certify that I have examined this "Mormon Bible", and know it to be the first or original edition as printed in Palmyra in 1830, as set forth in the title page.

John H. Gilbert
Compositor and Supervisor of the job
Palmyra, October 25, 1882

4. On David Whitmer (1805-88), see "Introduction to David Whitmer Collection."

7.
JOHN H. GILBERT TO CLARK BRADEN, 27 FEBRUARY 1884

Clark Braden and E. L. Kelley, *Public Discussion of the Issues Between the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and the Church of Christ (Disciples) Held in Kirtland, Ohio, Beginning February 12, and Closing March 8, 1884 Between E. L. Kelley, of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and Clark Braden, of the Church of Christ* (St. Louis: Clark Braden, [1884]), 382.

EDITORIAL NOTE

Clark Braden (1831-1912) was born at Gustavus, Ohio. He graduated from Farmer's College in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1860. As an educator, he served as president of Southern Illinois College (1866-70), president of Abingdon College (1876-77), and president of Southern Illinois Christian College (1899-1900). He also served as pastor of thirty-five Disciple churches, including churches at Bloomington and Perry, Illinois, and at Meaford, Canada. He was well known for conducting numerous public discussions and debates on various topics. He died while living with his youngest son near Mills City, California (*Centralia* [Illinois] *Sentinel,* 11 June 1965; Haynes 1914, 481-82).

In preparation for his second debate with elder E. L. Kelley of the RLDS Church, Braden wrote to John H. Gilbert requesting specific information. Below is Braden's letter to Gilbert (see Braden and Kelley 1884, 382):

KIRTLAND, OHIO, FEBRUARY 22, 1884.

MAJ. J. H. GILBERT,

Dear Sir: Kelley assailed your statement that the manuscript of the Book of Mormon lacked punctuation—as it came to you.

He got a telegram from David Whitmer, who claims that he has the original manuscript—that it is punctuated.

Will you please answer these queries:

I. As the manuscript was handed to you was it punctuated? If it was, to what extent?

II. Were the sentences commenced with capital letters[?] If so, to what extent?

III. Were there mis-spelled words? Were they frequent?

IV. Did you correct grammatical blunders to any extent?

Please to answer these queries, stating the facts in each case. Return questions, and answers. You can append your statements to this. Do not fail to do this, as Kelley has read what he wrote in "Saint's Herald," which is the reverse of what you told me. Answer as soon as you can.

Yours,
CLARK BRADEN.

In the present letter, Gilbert contradicts Whitmer's claims and attempts to answer each of Braden's questions.

PALMYRA, FEBRUARY 27, 1884.

MR. BRADEN,

Dear Sir: Answer to questions

I. Not a punctuation mark of any kind from beginning to end of manuscript.[1]

II. Sentences were not commenced with capitals: If they had been there would not have been so much difficulty in punctuation.

III. The spelling was good. The word "travail" occurred twice in one "form" and it was spelled "travel" in both instances. The copyist evidently not knowing the meaning of the word; and furthermore, [Oliver] Cowdery[2] looked over the manuscript when the proof was read.

IV. We were not allowed to correct any grammatical errors.

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1. David Whitmer incorrectly assumed that he was in possession of the original and only manuscript copy of the Book of Mormon (see VI.A.7, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH ORSON PRATT AND JOSEPH F. SMITH, 7-8 SEP 1878). He was evidently unaware that there were two copies and that his was the second one made by Oliver Cowdery for the printer. This manuscript, preserved entire in the Library-Archives of the RLDS church, clearly indicates that much of the punctuation had been added in pencil by an editor. Thus the physical evidence supports Gilbert's claim that the Book of Mormon manuscript generally lacked punctuation and that he had added it, although Gilbert exaggerates this claim.

2. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

If Mr. [David] Whitmer[3] claims that he has the manuscript that I used in setting up the Mormon Bible, and that it is punctuated and the sentences begin with a capital, I say it has been altered since it left my hands, or that he has not got the original.

Mr. Kelley mis-represented me in every important particular in his article published in the "Saint's Herald" of Plano, Illinois.[4] If Mr. Kelley has to resort to falsehood and mis-representation to defend Mormonism, he had better leave them and become an honest man if possible.

Yours truly,
(Signed) J. H. GILBERT.

3. On David Whitmer (1805-88), see "Introduction to David Whitmer Collection."

4. See III.B.8, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1881.

8.
JOHN H. GILBERT STATEMENT, 23 OCTOBER 1887

John H. Gilbert, Statement, 23 October 1887, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah.

EDITORIAL NOTE

On 23 October 1887, Mormon apostle Francis M. Lyman (1840-1916) of Utah obtained a simple statement from John H. Gilbert regarding his participation in the Book of Mormon's publication. In 1947 Francis W. Kirkham published the statement in the "Appendix" to the second edition of his *A New Witness for Christ in America* (see Kirkham 1951, 1:412). The following transcription is taken from the original in the LDS church archives.

Palmyra, <N.Y.> Oct. 23, 1887

At the request of Elder F[rancis]. M. Lyman of Utah, I make the following certifi=cate:—I was born in the town of Richmond, Ontario County, N.Y., April 13, 1802. I assisted E. B. Grandin in estimating the expense of print=ing 5,000 copies of the Mormon Bible, and the price agreed upon was $3,000. I was the principal compositor of said Bible, commencing on the same in Aug[ust]. 1829, and finishing the same in March, 1830.

[s] John H. Gilbert

9.
JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, SEPTEMBER 1888

Andrew Jenson, Edward Stevenson, and Joseph S. Black to Editor, 28 September 1888, *Deseret Evening News,* 11 October 1888. Reprinted in *Infancy of the Church* (Salt Lake City: n.p., 1889), 36-39.

EDITORIAL NOTE

In late September and early October 1888, Andrew Jenson, Edward Stevenson, and Joseph Smith Black visited the Palmyra/Manchester and Fayette, New York, areas. In a letter, dated 28 September 1888, the three men from Utah described their visit to the Hill Cumorah and gave an account of a conversation they had with an elderly James M. Ford, who "told us a number of interesting things in regard to the Smith family, but when he informed us that Joseph at the time he lived in this neighborhood was an old bachelor, we began to think that the old man's memory had commenced to fail him." They then related the contents of an interview they had with John H. Gilbert, which is here excerpted.

HILL CUMORAH,
Ontario County, New York,
September 28th, 1888.

Editor Deseret News:

... Our next man was Major John H. Gilbert, the person who set the type for the first edition of the Book of Mormon in Egbert Grandin's[1] printing office in Palmyra, 57 years ago. We found him living in a comfortable frame house on Gates Street. He is a remarkably well-preserved man, 86 years old, and withal gentlemanly and intelligent. He seemed to take pleasure in relating to us the particulars connected with the printing of the Book of Mormon. Of the 580 pages of which the book consisted he set in type about 500 pages himself.[2] The work of printing the book, he remembered distinctly, was

1. On Egbert B. Grandin (1806-45), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 77.

2. J. H. Bortles helped Gilbert set type (III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 3, 4). William Van Camp is also

commenced in August, 1829, and finished in March 1830. Oliver Cowdery[3] and Hyrum Smith[4] were the two who generally brought copy to the printing office, and Oliver Cowdery and Mr. Grandin read the proofs together by copy. Mr. Gilbert had, to his best recollection, only seen Joseph Smith twice. On the one occasion he came to the printing office and staid about twenty minutes, arranging something in regard to the work. Mr. Gilbert said that the late David Whitmer[5] had made several mistakes in his pamphlet, where he alludes to the printing of the Book of Mormon. Martin Harris,[6] he said had given security for the full amount agreed upon for printing, before the work was commenced, and there was no delay because of financial embarrassment.[7] At the time of printing Mr. Gilbert kept a private copy of the Book of Mormon for his own use, which he sold in an unbound condition a few years ago to P[linney]. T. Sexton,[8] a rich banker of Palmyra, for the

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said to have set some type (III.J.13, ORLANDO SAUNDERS, WILLIAM VAN CAMP, AND JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEWS WITH FREDERICK G. MATHER, JUL 1880, 204), as well as a few pages by Oliver Cowdery (III.G.3, OLIVER COWDERY TO JOSEPH SMITH, 28 DEC 1829; and III.H.2, JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 10 FEB 1879).

3. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

4. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

5. On David Whitmer (1805-88), see "Introduction to David Whitmer Collection."

6. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

7. Joseph S. Black separately mentioned Gilbert's correcting David Whitmer: "He said David Whitmer had made statements in the book which were not true. He represented that they were short of means and that they wanted to sell the manuscript, which was not so, as the pay was all arranged for before the printing was commenced" ("Journal of Joseph Smith Black," *Our Pioneer Heritage* 10 [1967]: 294). Gilbert corrects Whitmer's account of the so-called Canadian revelation, where it is stated that "more money was needed to finish the printing" and "Martin Harris ... was doing his best to sell a part of his farm, in order to raise the necessary funds" (see VI.A.33, DAVID WHITMER, *ADDRESS,* 1887, 30-31). But Harris had mortgaged his farm before the printing had commenced, so there would have been no need to stop the printing (III.L.14, MARTIN HARRIS MORTGAGE, 25 AUG 1829).

8. On Plinney T. Sexton (1796-1881), see III.A.11, PALMYRA RESIDENTS GROUP STATEMENT, 4 DEC 1833, n. 11.

sum of $500. Besides this, he has at different times secured a number of bound copies for several parties at the rate of $15 per copy. We made particular inquiry in regard to the manuscript or copy from which he set the Book of Mormon. His answers went to prove that it was the copy now in possession of the Whitmers in Richmond, M[iss]o[uri]. At times when he was hurried to get a form ready for the press other compositors would be sent to help him, and on such occasions he would frequently cut the pages in the manner we saw some of them cut in Richmond. Mr. Gilbert has not followed the trade of a printer for the last sixteen years, but whenever his birthday comes around he makes it a regular practice, and has done for several years, to go to the several printing offices in Palmyra and set up a stick or two of type. He is called the veteran printer of Wayne County, and he thinks he is about the oldest living printer in the United States; has a wife 78 years old living; also five children; six children are dead. ...

ANDREW JENSON,
EDWARD STEVENSON,
JOSEPH S. BLACK.

10.
JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEPTEMBER 1892

John H. Gilbert, "Memorandum, made by John H. Gilbert Esq, Sept[ember]. 8th, 1892[,] Palmyra, N.Y.," Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York.

EDITORIAL NOTE

John H. Gilbert apparently typed the present document himself. An undated clipping from the *Palmyra Courier* in the Birdsole scrapbook mentions Gilbert's typing his "Memorandum" (vol. 2, Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York). Gilbert evidently prepared this Memorandum to accompany the unbound proof sheets of the Book of Mormon that he loaned for exhibition at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893 (see III.H.11, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1893). While the present document exists in the Gilbert file at the Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, it is not certain that it is the original Memorandum or a subsequent copy.

Memorandum, made by John H. Gilbert Esq, Sept[ember]. 8th, 1892
Palmyra. N.Y.

I am a practical printer by trade. I have been a resident of Palmyra, N.Y. since about the year 1824, and during all that time have done some type-setting each year. I was aged ninety years on the 13th day of April, 1892., and on that day I went to the office of the Palmyra Courier and set a stick-ful of type.

My recollection of past events, and especially of the matters connected with the printing of the "Mormon Bible," is very accurate and faithful, and I have made the following memorandum at request, to accompany the photographs of "Mormon Hill," which have been made for the purpose of exhibits at the World's Fair in 1893.

MEMORANDUM, 8 SEPTEMBER 1892

In the forepart of June, 1829,[1] Mr. E. B. Grandin,[2] the printer of the "Wayne Sentinel," came to me and said he wanted I should assist him in estimating the cost of printing 5000 copies of a book that Martin Harris[3] wanted to get printed, which was called the "Mormon Bible." It was the second application of Harris to Grandin to do the job.—Harris assuring Grandin that the book would be printed in Rochester if he declined the job again.

Harris proposed to have Grandin do the job, if he would, as it would be quite expensive to keep a man in Rochester during the printing of the book, who would have to visit Palmyra two or three times a week for manu=script, &c. Mr. Grandin consented to do the job if his terms were accepted.

A few pages of the manuscript were submitted as a specimen of the whole, and it was said there would be about 500 pages.

The size of the page was agreed upon, and an estimate of the number of ems in a page, which would be 1000. and that a page of manuscript would make more than a page of printed matter, which proved to be correct. [p. 1]

The contract was to print, and bind with leather, 5000 copies for $3,000. Mr. Grandin got a new font of Small Pica, on which the body of the work was printed.[4]

When the printer was ready to commence work, Harris was notified, and Hyrum Smith[5] brought the first installment of manuscript, of 24 pages, closely written on common foolscap paper,;—he had it under his vest, and

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1. Gilbert states that this date marked Harris's second visit to Grandin and that in the interim a printer in Rochester had been consulted. These events necessarily occurred prior to agreement with Grandin and the application for a copyright on 11 June 1829 (see III.L.12, BOOK OF MORMON COPYRIGHT, 11 JUN 1829; see also III.K.17, THURLOW WEED REMINISCENCES, 1854, 1858, 1880 & 1884; and III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 52).

2. On Egbert B. Grandin (1806-45), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 77.

3. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

4. Evidently about the beginning of November 1829 more type was needed (see III.G.2, OLIVER COWDERY TO JOSEPH SMITH, 6 NOV 1829; see also III.H.11, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1893).

5. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

vest and coat closely buttoned over it. At night Smith came and got the manuscript, and with the same precaution carried it away. The next morning with the same watchfulness, be brought it again, and at night took it away. This was kept up for several days. The title page was first set up, and after proof was read and corrected, several copies were printed for Harris and his friends. On the second day—Harris and Smith being in the office—I called their attention to a grammatical error, and asked whether I should correct it? Harris consulted with Smith a short time, and turned to me and said; "The Old Testament is ungrammatical, set it as it is written."

After working a few days, I said to Smith on his handing me the manuscript in the morning; "Mr. Smith, if you would leave this manuscript with me, I would take it home with me at night and read and punctuate it, and I could get along faster in the day time, for now I have frequently to stop and read half a page to find how to punctuate it." His reply was, "We are commanded not to leave it." A few mornings after this, when Smith handed me the manu=script, he said to me:—"If you will give your word that this manuscript shall be returned to us when you get through with it, I will leave it with you." I assured Smith that it should be returned all right when I got through with it. For two or three nights I took it home with me and read it, and punctuated it with a lead pencil. This will account for the punctuation markes in pencil, which is referred to in the Mormon Report, an extract from which will be found below.[6]

Martin Harris, Hyrum Smith and Oliver Cowdery,[7] were very frequent visitors [p. 2] to the office during the printing of the Mormon Bible. The mansucript [manuscript] was supposed to be in the handwriting of Cowdery. Every Chapter, if I remember correctly, was one solid paragraph, without a punctuation mark, from be=ginning to end.

Names of persons and places were generally capitalized, but sentences had no end. The character or short &, was used almost invariably where the word and, occurred, except at the end of a chapter, I puncutated [punctuated] it to make it read as I supposed the Author intended, and but very little

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6. This is never given. However, the manuscript had been examined by the LDS in 1878 (see VI.A.7, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH ORSON PRATT AND JOSEPH F. SMITH, 7-8 SEP 1878) and the RLDS in 1884 (see VI.A.21, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPH SMITH III, AND OTHERS, JUL 1884).

7. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

punctuation was altered in proof-reading.[8] The Bible was printed 16 pages at a time, so that one sheet of paper made two copies of 16 pages each, requiring 2500 sheets of paper for each form of 16 pages. There were 37 forms of 16 pages each,—570 pages in all.

The work was commenced in August 1829., and finished in March 1830,—seven months. Mr J. H. Bortles[9] and myself done the press work until December taking nearly three days to each form.[10]

In December Mr. Grandin hired a journeyman press-man, Thomas McAuley,[11] or "Whistling Tom," as he was called in the office, and he and Bortles did the balance of the press-work. The Bible was printed on a "Smith" Press, single pull, and old fashioned "Balls" or ["]Niggerheads" were used—composi=tion rollers not having come into use in small printing offices.

The printing was done in the third story of the west end of "Exchange Row," and the binding by Mr. [Luther] Howard,[12] in the second story the lower story being used as a book store, by Mr. Grandin, and now—1892—by Mr. M[osher]. Story as a dry-goods store.[13]

Cowdery held and looked over the manuscript when most of the proofs were read. Martin Harris once or twice, and Hyrum Smith once, Grandin supposing these men could read their own writing as well, if not better, than any-

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8. The printer's manuscript of the Book of Mormon at the RLDS Church Library-Archives bears out Gilbert's description in every particular.

9. John H. Bortles appears in the Palmyra Village Minutes in 1835 as treasurer (typescript, Palmyra King's Daughters Free Library, Palmyra, New York), and in the 1833 assessment of Ontario County as owning property in Port Gibson (Ontario County Records Center and Archives, Canandaigua, New York).

10. Other sources give additional information about the printing of the Book of Mormon. "Major Gilbert assures us that he did about half of the press work himself" (*Wayne County Journal,* 19 April 1877). "John H. Bortles and 'Whistling Tom' McCauley doing the press work on a hand press-working 10 tokens per day, or two forms each week of half-sheet sixteens for an edition of 5,000 copies. That left Wednesdays and Saturdays for printing of the two sides of the 'Wayne Sentinel' and the turning off of such job work as came to hand" (*Wayne County Journal,* 3 May 1883).

11. This person remains unidentified.

12. On Luther Howard, see III.E.3, *PALMYRA REFLECTOR,* 1829-1831, n. 11.

13. In the 1840s Grandin's bookstore on the first floor became the hardware store of Charles E. Wilder, and subsequently Mosher M. Story's Dry Goods Company (T. Cook 1930, 80).

one else;[14] and if there are any discrepancies between the Palmyra addition [edition] and the manuscript these men should be held responsible. [p. 3]

Joseph Smith Jr had nothing to do whatever with the printing or furnishing copy for the printers, being but once in the office during the printing of the Bible, and then not over 15, or 20 minutes.

Hyrum Smith was a common laborer, and worked for anyone as he was called on.

Cowdery taught school winters—so it was said—but what he done summers, I do not know.

Martin Harris was a farmer, owning a good farm, of about 150 acres, about a mile north of Palmyra Village, and had money at interest. Martin,—as every body called him,—was considered by his neighbors a very honest man; but on the subject of Marmonism, he was said to be crazy. Martin was the main spoke in the wheel of Mormonism in its start in Palmyra, and I may say, the only spoke. In the fall of 1827,[15] he told us what wonderful discoveries Jo Smith had made, and of his finding plates in a hill in the town of Man=chester, (three miles south of Palmyra,)—also found with the plates a large pair of "spectacles," by putting which on his nose and looking at the plates, the spectacles turned the hyroglyphics into good English.[16] The question might by [be] asked here whether Jo or the spectacles was the translator?

Sometime in 1828,[17] Martin Harris, who had been furnished by someone with what he said was a fac-simile of the hyroglychics [hieroglyphics] of one of the plates started for New York.[18] On his way he stopped at Albany and called on Lt Gov Bradish,[19]—with what success I

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14. Gilbert here implies that in addition to Oliver Cowdery's handwriting the handwritings of Martin Harris and Hyrum Smith also appeared in the printer's manuscript. With the help of Dean C. Jessee, Royal Skousen has identified the handwriting of these three persons in the printer's manuscript at the RLDS Church Library-Archives in Independence, Missouri (Skousen 1992 and 1993).

15. Harris said that he first heard about Joseph Smith's gold plates from his brother Preserved Harris in early October 1827 (III.F.10, MARTIN HARRIS INTERVIEW WITH JOEL TIFFANY, 1859, 167-68).

16. In his 1832 History, Smith also referred to "spectacles for to read the Book" (I.A.7, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1832, 5).

17. In February 1828.

18. See V.E.2, BOOK OF MORMON CHARACTERS, DEC 1827-FEB 1828.

19. Luther Bradish (1783-1863) was born at Cummington, Massachusetts. He later settled in Franklyn County, New York, where he was well-

do not know.[20] He proceeded to New York, and called on Prof C[harles]. Anthon,[21] made known his business and presented his hieroglyphics.

This is what the Professor said in regard to them:—1834—

"The paper in question was, in fact, a singular scroll. It consisted of all kinds of singular characters, disposed in columns, and had evidently been prepared by some person who had before him at the time a book containing various alphabets; Greek and Hebrew letters, crosses [p. 4] and flourishes, Roman letters inverted or placed sidewise, arranged and placed in perpendicular columns, and the whole ended in a rude delineation of a circle, divided into various compartments, arched with various strange marks, and evidently copied after the Mexican Calendar, given by Humboldt, but copied in such a way as not to betray the source whence it was derived. I am thus particular as to the contents of the paper, in as much as I have frequently conversed with my friends on the subject since the Mormon excite=ment began, and well remember that the paper contained anything else but "Egyptian Hieroglyphics."[22]

Martin returned from his trip east satisfied that "Joseph" was a "little smarter than Prof Anthon."

Martin was something of a prophet:—He frequently said that that "Jackson would be the last president that we would have; and that all persons who did not embrace Mormonism in two years time would be stricken off the face of the earth."[23] He said that Palmyra was to be the

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known for his travels and knowledge of languages. During 1827 to 1830, Bradish served in New York's State Assembly in Albany, where Harris evidently visited him (Kimball 1970, 328-29).

20. Pomeroy Tucker also mentioned that Harris "sought the interpretation and bibliological scrutiny of such scholars as Hon. Luther Bradish, Dr. Mitchell, Professor Anthon and others" (III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 42; see also I.C.1, JOSEPH SMITH, SR., INTERVIEW WITH FAYETTE LAPHAM, 1830, 307). An early source indicates that Harris stopped at Utica and Albany on his way to New York City (III.I.2, W. W. PHELPS TO E. D. HOWE, 15 JAN 1831).

21. On Charles Anthon (1797-1867), see introduction to V.D.2, CHARLES ANTHON TO E. D. HOWE, 17 FEB 1834.

22. This is an imperfect quote from V.D.2, CHARLES ANTHON TO E. D. HOWE, 17 FEB 1834, 271-72.

23. Compare III.F.6, EBER D. HOWE ON MARTIN HARRIS, 1834, 14; III.J.28, ALBERT CHANDLER TO WILLIAM LINN, 22 DEC 1898; see also Vogel 1989, 26.

New Jerusalem, and that her streets were to be paved with gold.[24]

Martin was in the office when I finished setting up the testimony of the three witnesses,—(Harris—Cowdery and Whitmer—) I said to him,—"Martin, did you see those plates with your naked eyes?" Martin looked down for an instant, raised his eyes up, and said, "No, I saw them with a spir[i]tual eye."[25]

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24. According to the *Lyons Gazette* for 9 August 1854, Harris's prophecy was that "a certain hill, about three fourths of a mile east of Palmyra, was or is, to open, out from which was to come an angel who would put one foot upon the sinful village and sink it. The site was subsequently to become the 'New Jerusalem,' into which the righteous (all Mormons, of course) were to be gathered" (p. 126).

25. Since the "Testimony of Three Witnesses" appears at the back of the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon, this conversation between Harris and Gilbert evidently took place as typesetting and printing was drawing to a close, about March 1830. Gilbert repeated Harris's statement on other occasions (see III.H.3, JOHN H. GILBERT TO JAMES T. COBB, 16 MAR 1879; and III.H.11, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1893). Pomeroy Tucker, who also worked in the office when the Book of Mormon was being printed, said Harris "used to practice a good deal of his characteristic jargon about 'seeing with the spiritual eye,' and the like" (III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 71; see also discussion in "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection").

11.
JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1893

"Mormon Leaders at Their Mecca. Western New York the Scene of a Powerful and Interesting Revival of Mormonism. Joe Smith's Life at Palmyra. Beginning by Selling Cakes and Ale, and Then Taking a Hand at Receiving Revelations. The Rise of Mormonism. Dramatic Events in the Development of the Church of Latter Day Saints," *New York Herald,* 25 June 1893, 12.

EDITORIAL NOTE

The following interview with John H. Gilbert was conducted by a correspondent of the *New York Herald* on 23 June 1893 in Palmyra, New York. The same correspondent also interviewed Orson Saunders (see III.J.24, ORSON SAUNDERS REMINISCENCE, 1893) and other unidentified persons in the Palmyra/Manchester area (see III.J.25, PALMYRA-MANCHESTER RESIDENTS ACCOUNT, 1893).

INTERVIEW WITH THE PRINTER OF THE BIBLE.

Major John H. Gilbert, who had formerly owned the printing office and subsequently sold it to Mr. Grandin,[1] was an expert printer. He was asked if he would undertake the job of setting up the Mormon Bible, as they wished him to do the work, he to receive twenty-five cents a thousand ems.

I asked the Major yesterday if he would give the HERALD an interview on the subject. He would do it cheerfully. "That was a long time ago," he said—"sixty-three years—yet I remember the incidents connected with the printing of that Bible as plainly as if they had happened yesterday. The Mormons first submitted the title page. I kept a copy of it, also the proof sheets of the book, which are now on exhibition at the World's Fair in Chicago. A peculiarity of this Mormon Bible of to-day is that it is nearly the same as it was when I printed it. In the first copy it was said: 'By Joseph Smith, Jr.; Author and Proprietor.' In later editions the announcement was made that Joseph Smith, Jr., was the translator of the book."

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1. On Egbert B. Grandin (1806-45), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 77.

Continuing, Major Gilbert said:—"It required seven months of hard work to set up that Bible. The manuscript was clearly written, but there were no capital letters and no punctuation marks of any kind in the entire book. At first Hyrum Smith[2] and Harris,[3] who brought the copy to the office, were very exacting. They gave only twenty-five pages at a time and would allow none of it to remain in the office over night. I told them it must be punctuated. Each chapter made a solid paragraph, without a break or anything to show the beginning or ending of a sentence."]

JOE SMITH IN THE BACKGROUND.

"Joe Smith was not at the office at all. I never saw him except once or twice during the preparation, seven months. All the business was done by proxy. Joe Smith was in his cave or room where the translating had been done, getting new revelations, I suppose, from the angel. When I explained to Harris that the matter should be punctuated and put in proper form he retired for consultation.[4] The answer came back that the Old Testament was full of bad grammar and what was good enough for the Bible was good enough for them. One of Smith's literary assistants—in fact, the only one he had except Rigdon[5]—was Cowdery.[6] A large portion of the manuscript was in his handwriting. At times, however, it came in the handwriting of one of the Smith women.[7] No corrections were made beyond typographical errors. They soon allowed me to punctuate, so I went over the manuscript with pencil as it was brought in, punctuating and paragraphing as I read. My pencil

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2. On Hyrum Smith (1800-44), see I.A.15, JOSEPH SMITH HISTORY, 1839, n. 12.

3. On Martin Harris (1783-1875), see "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

4. Elsewhere Gilbert said Harris consulted with Hyrum Smith, who was in Grandin's office at the time (III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 2).

5. On Sidney Rigdon (1793-1876), see introduction to I.A.13, SIDNEY RIGDON ACCOUNT, CIRCA 1836.

6. On Oliver Cowdery (1806-50), see "Introduction to Oliver Cowdery Collection."

7. While lost portions of the original manuscript may have been in Emma Smith's handwriting, her handwriting does not appear in the printer's manuscript. Rather, according to the recent research of Royal Skousen, the handwritings of three men appear in the printer's copy: Oliver Cowdery's, Hyrum Smith's, and Martin Harris's (Skousen 1992 and 1993).

marks are on the original manuscript now in the keeping of a Mormon at Richmond, M[iss]o[uri].[8] I understand the Mormons cannot get possession of that manuscript at any price.[9]

"I tried to learn something about the humbug, but they declared that everything they gave me was a direct translation from the golden plates. As I understood it, those golden plates were taken from the mountain to Smith's house and put in a bag. He was so frightened at first after he had recovered them from the guardianship of the angel that he hid them for a day and then took them to his house.[10] Later the alleged plates were carried to a cave for translation.[11]

"Nobody believes that there were any plates, unless Smith secured a few of the archaeological plates at a museum to show on extraordinary occasions to doubting friends. In that cave it is supposed they really went over the manuscript which had been stolen by Rigdon from Spalding's house, and, by incorporating it with Bible language, disguised it and made it the basis of their new gospel.

"I knew that Harris was an honest man, and one day I asked him to tell me truly if he had ever seen those golden plates. Yes, he'd seen them, he said.

"'Do you mean that you actually saw the plates with your naked eye?'

"Harris' face fell and he was downcast for a moment. Then he said, 'I saw them with a spiritual eye.'[12]

"Some time ago Brigham Young's son [Brigham Young, Jr.] called on me and said, 'I suppose, Major Gilbert, that you think our Mormon Bible a humbug.'

"Yes," I replied, "a very big humbug.["]

"Brigham replied with a smile, 'If it is a humbug it is the most successful humbug ever known.'"

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8. George W. Schweich, grandson of David Whitmer, took possession of Whitmer's manuscripts upon the latter's death in 1888. Schweich was not a member of any Mormon group.

9. See VI.A.26, DAVID WHITMER INTERVIEW WITH *CHICAGO TRIBUNE,* 15 DEC 1885.

10. See I.B.5, LUCY SMITH HISTORY, 1845, MS:63-66.

11. See also III.B.8, JOHN H. GILBERT INTERVIEW, 1881; Gilbert probably heard from Pomeroy Tucker about Smith translating the plates in a cave (see III.J.8, POMEROY TUCKER ACCOUNT, 1867, 48-49).

12. Compare III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 5; see also discussion in "Introduction to Martin Harris Collection."

"In printing the Bible did you do the presswork as well as the typesetting?" I asked of the Major.

"Yes, I did most of the presswork also. I had learned my trade at Canandaigua and understood the business thoroughly. After Harris had promised to insure the payment for the printing Grandin went to New York and bought the type—500 pounds of new small pica.[13] He brought it home and I laid the cases and went to work on the book. I don't think there was any delay during the seven months that I was at it. When the Bible was finished and neatly bound the Mormons were elated. It was the thing they needed to bring them followers, and Harris went about as a missionary, believing every word he uttered, that Smith was a man in daily communication with the Almighty." ...

13. Evidently about the beginning of November 1829 more type was needed (see III.G.2, OLIVER COWDERY TO JOSEPH SMITH, 6 NOV 1829; see also III.H.10, JOHN H. GILBERT MEMORANDUM, 8 SEP 1892, 2).

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- All known documents (letters, interviews, statements) relating to pre-1831 Latter-day Saint history by or about:

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  OLIVER COWDERY
  JOHN H. GILBERT

- Statements by prominent Smith family neighbors including:

  WILLARD CHASE
  LUCY HARRIS
  PETER INGERSOLL
  LORENZO SAUNDERS
  CAROLINE ROCKWELL
  WILLIAM STAFFORD

- Newspaper articles from the 1820-30s published in:

  THE PALMYRA FREEMAN
  PALMYRA REFLECTOR
  WAYNE SENTINEL

Excerpts:

"[Harris] stated that the Prophet translated a portion of the Book of Mormon with the seer stone in his possession. The stone was placed in a hat that was used for that purpose, and with the aid of this seer stone the Prophet would read sentence by sentence as Martin wrote, and if he made any mistake the sentence would remain before the Prophet until corrected, when another sentence would appear."—Martin Harris, interviewed by Edward Stevenson, *The Millennial Star*, 1886

"[Harris] then spoke again and said, 'I will tell you a wonderful thing that happened after Joseph had found the plates: three of us took a notion to take some tools and go to the hill and hunt for some more boxes or gold or something, and indeed we found a stone box; we got quite excited about it and dug quite carefully around it; we were ready to take it up: but behold by some unseen power it slipped back into the hill; we stood there and looked at it; one of us took a crowbar and tried to drive it through the lid to hold it; but it glanced and only broke one corner off of the box.' "—Martin Harris, interviewed by Ole A. Jensen, 1918; excluded from the published version in the *Improvement Era*, 1923

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